

ORWELL MANOR.

A NOVEL,

BY

MARY ELIZABETH PARKER

Sometimes fair truth in fiction we disguise,
Sometimes present her naked to mens eyes,

HESIOD.

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ORWELL MANOR.

C H A P. I.

IN a night when contending elements in warring clamor denounced their separate right to terrify mankind, one female servant had, with peculiar care, doubly locked the doors, and watchfully examined the wooden bars of each casement shutter, in a large, but shattered house, hid amidst the mountains of South Wales.

She proceeded to the apartment of her mistress, assuring herself, by the way, that as she had never done harm to any body, nothing could hurt her, yet she forbore looking behind her, and reached the chamber where the family were assembled. A loud gust of wind, accompanied by a burst of thunder, occasioned her entering it rather precipitately.

An inquisitive sort of tremor accompanied the interrogation of,

“ What’s the matter, Agnès ? ” from the eldest lady, added to a laugh of that convulsive kind,

resembling the ague in a shivering fit ; in which, however, she was joined by her daughters.

They drew nearer to the fire—they stirred it up, and desired Agnes to place herself, for that night, in the same room.

They then seemed to defy the storm, and opened a book, to renew their evening occupation.

While Julia is turning over the leaves, to find the page where she had left off, I will give my reader some account of their gloomy residence, and why they were induced to prefer it.

True, they had known the joys of social intercourse ; but, from a series of circumstances, were happy to accept the offer of Lord Orwell, whose father had sometimes spent a few months in the year at this mansion.

At his death, it no longer became the resort of any of that family, but was left to the care of an old woman, to open the windows when she thought proper, and, as it is commonly called, keep it aired.

His Lordship chanced to meet the present tenants at his banker's. From some undescribables he observed in them, he was induced to inquire who they were.

Mr. —— replied, he had long known them, and that he wished to know how to serve them ; as their mother had, as his Lordship witnessed, just quitted him with much chagrin. She had, he said, been consulting him, what was best to be done, as her circumstances were reduced.

" Let them get out of this scene of vice and folly," said his Lordship. " There is Orwell Manor stands unoccupied ; I should be obliged, instead of conferring a favour on them, if they would live in it : The old woman, placed there,

is

is letting it go to ruin, for want of care : My steward informs me, the furniture is eaten by moths, and dropping piecemeal, from damp. I will place her in a cottage, and immediately give orders for the reception of your friends."

The good heart of Mr. — rejoiced in this fortunate event, and he did not fail to communicate the intelligence to Mrs. Byron ; and Lord Orwell, in consequence, waited on her, to repeat his offers ; which from his character, and the advice of Mr. —, she joyfully accepted ; and soon after the day was fixed for their departure.

It was in the month of January, about six in the evening, they turned off from the turnpike road, at the 190 mile stone ; and, after much tossing and jumbling, they arrived at this habitation.

The moon was kind enough to exhibit some very fine elms on each side this rugged road.

They stopped on the steep of a hill, beside a very high wall, where the postillion, after much search, found some worn-out steps, that led up to a broken door ; at which, with the head of his whip, he knocked forcibly.

The old woman hobbled forth, in great speed, with her candle under her apron, to give a welcome to her expected guests, and declared, how very sorry she was, that the front entrance was so overgrown, that a carriage could not enter that way ; but if the ladies would step across the poultry yard, through the brew-house, into the kitchen and through the hall, they would find a good fire in the oak parlour.

I do not pretend to describe the sensations of my heroines, ever used to gaiety and joy ; let those who have experienced the like, thank their own fancy, for doing justice to what *cannot* be described ; suffice it for me to say, that from that period, till

the beginning of this history, little happened worthy relating.

The house remained in the same state, overgrown without, with encroaching evergreens; clean within, but dreary; one quarter part not being occupied; the land being let to farmers, there remained only two gardens, whose tottering walls, alcoves, temples, flights of steps, maimed statues, and shrubs, towering into trees, gave you a melancholy idea of time past: And its present mistress could not but confess, it bore a just resemblance to her fortune.

In this solitude their chief endeavour was to profit by necessity; and many elegant and useful accomplishments were called forth, which softened that solemnity of scene, which must, by degrees, have dwindled into melancholy.

The dance, the song, the lute, all broke upon the gloom; and the glad echo through the hall, reverberated the sounds of joy and innocence.

The book was generally the night's resource; and sometimes history, and sometimes lighter reading, took their turns in their amusements.

Julia had turned the leaves of one of fancy's favorites, when, raising an eye, as soft as Charity's, up to her mother, she exclaimed; "Was it fancy, or a real dagger, Adeline picked up in that dreadful chamber?

The heavy footstep bespoke some one beneath the window, and the ear of attention lent by Mrs. Byron, precluded her answer.

Julia shut the book; Gertrude took her mother's hand, and, more firm than the rest, spoke, in a sort of smile, her courage; Armenia and Annette looked up in silent terror; Agnes could no longer contain: "Dearest madam," she cried,
"that

"that dreadful room, that never has been opened since the late Lord's death."

A peal of thunder stopped her loquacity, and a loud knocking at the great front door, seemed to demand admission, with little ceremony.

One impulsive start electrified the whole party, till a repetition of the noise, called them to recollect, that though no direct road went beyond the house; yet some natural cause must have produced this clamorous assault; notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather, and the awkward hour: They therefore instinctively followed Mrs. Byron to a chamber over the hall, whose window was above the front door. Opening it incautiously, the candle blew out.

Agnes, no longer able to subdue her terrors, clasped her mistress's knees, who was half dead with fear herself, expecting ruffians, to force their way in, and destroy her beloved children before her face.

Gertrude, more collected, and by nature endowed with strength of mind beyond her years, loudly pronounced, who's there? When a voice from below, answered, in no very gentle terms: I thought there were none but *dead* people *lived* here; will you open the door? all the village folk are abed, and master has fallen from his horse, and is t'other side the wall, under a tree, half drowned with rain.

The human voice, in so dreary a moment, reassured our little party; and though suspicion, for some moments, took place, yet humanity became predominant; and Mrs. Byron desired if he could possibly bring his master up to the house, he would set about it immediately.

"Send

"Send the farmer, or your man to help me," replied the stranger.

This gave fresh courage to our timid host, concluding that if any evil design was conceived against their lives or properties, he would be better acquainted with circumstances.

Being informed it was not a farm house, he begged pardon, and set off to assist his master, in reaching the mansion.

"I know not what I am about," exclaimed Mrs. Byron; "I am giving entrance to strange men at such an hour, unprotected;" when recollecting the history of the good Samaritan, hanging in print above her head, she ordered Agnes to light the candle, and proceeded down stairs, with a beating trembling heart, to unlock and unbolt the only barrier that seemed to be between her and fate.

The servant advanced up the flight of stone steps, with his master leaning on him. His slow pace announced great pain; and on entering the hall, he placed himself on the first seat, sickening with anguish, and streaming with rain. He cast a grateful look on the half-terrified groupe, which, in an instant, called back all their courage; and their solicitude now became as ardent, as their fears had been oppressive.

It was evident his arm was broken; besides other bruises as yet scarcely felt, wholly deprived of any proper assistance, till day-light, Mrs. Byron, Agnes, and *Stephen*, contrived to carry their unfortunate guest in a chair up stairs; where she ordered him to be placed in her own bed, and went to procure some comfort, to assist in reviving his spirits sufficiently, as to bear up against the unavoidable suffering he must endure.

Stephen, by this time, recollecting his horses,
who

who stood fastened to a tree in the avenue ; and after having procured a lanthorn and proper directions from Agnes, he found what still bore the denomination of *the* stable, though half bereft by furious winds of its covering ; and fortunately some hay, which was deposited there, to regale the curate's horse, which, once a fortnight, brought him to read a morning service, that generally concluded by giving his benediction to Mrs. Byron's roast beef.

That Lady having performed every rite of hospitality, left Agnes and Stephen to attend the stranger, and retired to Gertrude's apartment, where they talked over the affair, till the weary spirit layed a defect in the exprefſion, and they ſlept on the half uttered ſentence.

C H A P. II.

AURORA, jealous of those elements, whose clouded forms threatened to invade her precincts, arose with double lustre : She stream'd her varied coloured robe from east to west, and chased those ſullen shades that dared obscure her way. Her gold and purple chariot shot by the window, and its rays awoke Gertrude, who rising gently, ſtole to the door of her chamber, and in a whisper, which reached the opposite door, called for

Agnes,

Agnes, whose tip-toe step announced her fear of awaking her charge.

She entered with Gertrude, and going to the bedside, she immediately informed her mistress, that Stephen, in the course of the night, had given her the history of his master; that he was a great nabob, and named Sir Theodore Mandville; that he was immensely rich; had one son, in a great employ in India, and a daughter about eighteen in England; that he had lately purchased an estate in Wales; and that they were on their journey thither, when tempted by description, his master had turned from the road, about seven miles, to see a famous ruin; that the storm then commenced, and being loth to quit what shelter the broken fragments afforded, they had waited its abatement till near dark, and then could not proceed with much expedition.

They did not perceive they had taken a wrong route, till the village clock warned them they were not where they ought to be.

No friendly ray of light gave them hopes of reception; they rapped at several huts, but the weary labourer, either from sleep or fear, was silent. At length the light, which had directed them to Orwell Manor, broke through the trees, just as a peal of thunder had caused Sir Theodore's horse to rear up, and falling backwards, had well nigh killed both horse and rider.

Stephen, appalled by accumulated distress, placed his master at the foot of an elm; and pushed by the desire of finding relief or assistance for him, surmounted those difficulties that would have impeded his entrance, even by day-light. Glad, at length, to find a door, he had assaulted it with a heart-felt wish to burst it open, for expedition's sake; but as it appeared to have been made for a cathedral,

cathedral, it withstood his efforts, and caused a more impatient demand for entrance.

Thus far had Agnes proceeded with her intelligence, when Mrs. Byron interrupted her by a desire, that she would immediately go to the village, and send off a messenger to ——, for Mr. Smith, the surgeon; as it was probable, in a journey of ten miles, he might be some hours before he reached them.

This good hearted girl, cut the thread of her narration, and tripped to the village, scarcely feeling her feet. In the mean time Mrs. Byron being dressed, went to occupy the vacant post of Agnes, in the chamber of Sir Theodore.

Stephen having missed his companion, placed himself in a chair, at the head of the bed, in an erect posture; his eye-lids had forgotten their duty, but his mouth changed conditions with them, keeping watch wide open: nor did the gentle step of Mrs. Byron disturb him. She again stole forth to visit her family, and arouse those who were not yet awake; for she rightly judged, their occupations would be much augmented by the late occurrence; and, as they all loved Agnes, each was willing to spare her those light offices they were capable of performing themselves.

The clumsy attempts of Stephen, to step lightly in a pair of strong boots, informed Mrs. Byron her patient was awake. She instantly visited him, when, putting back the curtain with his right arm, he made her a compliment, even in that situation, that plainly evinced the man of manners, and those graces of voice and feature shone conspicuous in that moment, springing from a heart that informed the whole.

He only complained of his arm, and proposed rising, and sending for a chaise to carry him to

—; but on Mrs. Byron's declaring she had sent for a surgeon; and that the idea of his quitting them in that situation, gave her great pain, he voluntarily submitted to his present confinement; and it was determined Sir Theodore should remain her guest till perfectly recovered.

A few hours brought Mr. Smith, whose speed had been much expedited by the information of the messenger, who had learned from the communicative Agnes, that a great Baronet had the misfortune to break his arm, and was dangerously ill at the Manor.

Not being perfectly skilled in the distinction of titles, and hearing often of a certain Duke and Marquis in those parts, honest Roger, in his hurry, told this son of Galen, that he must be quick, for the Duke or the Lord might be dead, if he did not make haste, as he had lain all night under his horse's back, who had fallen upon him.

The prospect of such a patient, with the fear he might escape to the shades of death, without giving him his fee, lent wings to the trotting mare, and Mr. Surgeon, Apothecary, &c. &c. Smith, arrived at ten o'clock in the morning; and hearing his patient was so much at his ease, he drew his breath, took a glass of cherry brandy to cool himself, wiped the mire from his boots, and recommended to Agnes the care of his great coat, with a hint to dry and brush the bottom of it.

After bowing from the chamber door to the bed, he enquired into the circumstances; and advising the ladies to retire, he proceeded to business, and with very little difficulty replaced the bones, which he pronounced would, by proper attendance on his part, and quiet on Sir Theodore's, re-unite in a short time; not however forgetting, that it would be necessary to administer some soporiferous

poriferous draughts, saline mixtures, cordial juleps, and gentle cathartics, which his young man should bring every evening, and he would himself call every morning.

All this being assented to, Mr. Smith departed in the same obsequious manner he had entered; and now it was arranged, that the care of attending the Baronet should be divided between Mrs. Byron, Gertrude, and Julia, in the day, and that Stephen and Agnes should relieve each other at night; the one remaining till two o'clock, the other succeeding till morning.

This method did not fail to accelerate the cure; and the third day Sir Theodore earnestly entreated to enjoy their society, and begged, that instead of placing themselves in a corner to watch him, they would give him their company; which they were prevailed upon to do.

He requested Gertrude to be his amanuensis, to inform his daughter of the accident that had befallen him.

The task was difficult, as he insisted on her saying all he dictated; and his too grateful acknowledgments of the favours he had received at Orwell Manor, was painful to transcribe; but he would have it so.

In the course of conversation, Sir Theodore expressed his astonishment at finding such a family in so lonely and sequestered a situation: A half-suppressed sigh escaped from more than one, and a demur took place; at length Mrs. Byron replied, "before I lead you to the abode we at present occupy there are so many turnings and windings in my life, that would fatigue your weak state to follow me through; when you are able to stand a call upon your feelings, we will resume the subject."

"But

"But surely, my dear madam," rejoined the Baronet, "you do not mean to immure those delightful girls in this Monkish habitation, till, like the flower that blows in the wilderness, they bloom and droop unknown, unsought, unseen."

"Alas! I see no alternative," rejoined Mrs. Byron, while the tear struggled to break through the bonds that sought to repel it.

There was much conveyed to a mind like Sir Theodore's in those few words. He thought upon them, and a few days proved he had not forgot them. Changing the conversation, at that moment his thoughts turned, as they were wont to do, upon his children: He spoke of his son in India, and turning to Gertrude, said, "There is the country for women! will you go, Gertrude, if I should return thither?"

The crimson blush that dyed the cheek of his attentive hearer, gave rise to other suspicitions; and he again sought to turn the unlucky course of his interrogations.

She soon after quitted the room, and Julia followed her.

Mrs. Byron spoke: "The disquiet you see in Gertrude is a never-failing corrosive in my heart: Her being born in a military life, gave her that attachment to it natural to a society she had been bred amongst; and though at an early period we were cut off from much intercourse with them, she became acquainted with an amiable and elegant young man, in that profession, by whom she was beloved and loved again.

A soldier of fortune, he scorned to deceive her; but laying his circumstances and prospects before her, declared his intentions of going to India, and, either one way or other, making himself worthy of her. This resolution he actually put in practice;

tice; and we hear frequently, that he is signalizing himself; but in this war, with so illiberal a foe, we dread to learn his adventurous pursuit after glory, will either cause his death or slavery.

The April shower had refreshed the heart of Gertrude, and she returned beaming complacency on all around; while the contemplative Julia strolled after her, and leaning one side against the window, mused over the tall trees she had counted a thousand times before.

Stephen entering, presented letters he had been to B—— to fetch; and a newspaper being read aloud, was a feast they greedily devoured.

This and several succeeding days passed on, none counting the tedious hours; all was delighting and delighted; and they began to dread the time when their agreeable guest would, from his perfect recovery, leave them.

Letters again arrived, and Sir Theodore announced to Mrs. Byron his daughter's intention of making them a visit, and taking the charge of him at his departure; and that she would probably be with them in three or four days. He added, they should, with Mrs. Byron's permission, intrude upon her one week more, after his daughter's arrival.

This was joyful intelligence to the party; all were busied in preparations, and Julia most of all.

They laughed, they anticipated, they wondered what the elegant Miss Mandville would think of them, who were so rusticated by seclusion from society, that they knew not how to place their clothes: Some of them wore caps,—some their hair as wild and flowing as their mother Eve's; and though they wanted not for ornaments, undisturbed they remained in the same condition as when they came from London: Yet nature had
been

been liberal in her donations, and unadorned, an elegance of manner spoke the soul above the gross of human composition.

Gertrude was tall and finely shaped, though in style of face resembling Roxalana ; yet her gentle disposition threw a meekness into her eyes charmed you to her.

Julia bore the true Madona character in her countenance ; soft soothing melancholy sat upon her brow, and when she smiled, she really was too lovely.

Armenia had just attained her fifteenth year, and the opening bud of health blushed on her cheek. An eager desire to please, made every one her friend ; which she requited by the utmost assiduity to deserve it.

Annette, about thirteen, gave early proofs of a most lively and susceptible disposition. The unrestrained laugh and the big tear came with equal force; her feelings bore down all before them, nor could either fear or shame repel those sensations, when called forth by proper incitements.

It may be deemed taking too great a freedom, the making Agnes a party in this scene of introduction ; but a faithful domestic of either sex is so valuable, and so rarely to be met with, that celebrating their perfections is a delightful theme.

Come then, blushing, bashful Agnes, lift up thy sparkling downcast eye ; and let thy clear brown skin shew thy animated mind, that with a pinkish tinge adorns thy little person : Born in a hut, thy heart deserves a palace. — One of eight,—all the offspring of the drum-major,—thy mistress took thee at an early age, and placed thee supernumerary in her nursery, and soon thy officious zeal requited her ; growing with her own, she almost loved thee like them ; but when fortune frowned,

Mrs.

Mrs. Byron would have placed thee with Lady C——, to advance thy station, and remove thee from the daily performance of scrub. Thy tears and entreaties to stay, forced thy mistress to declare, ye should never part till you found one should supersede her in your love.

As my dramatis personæ is taken from the life, kind reader, the stars are in fault, not me if they don't please you.

C H A P. III.

OUR friends had just finished a plain, but neat repast, and Armenia was paring a nonpareil, to offer the Baronet, when Agnes abruptly entered, and beckoned her out. With scarce breath to finish the sentence, she began, "They are coming,—they are coming! I saw the chaise turn down the avenue, with two ladies in it,—so full of ban-boxes; what a fine lady she is, I dare say; but they must be here in a minute; so I will run and help them out." And away she skipped out of sight in a moment.

The sound of the carriage caused a general move forwards, to welcome their new acquaintance.

She was preceded by Stephen to the hall door, who, with a low bow and significant look, seemed to say, ye are all well met.

Miss Mandville passed with a hasty, but graceful

ful step, half bowing, on to her father, who she pressed to her bosom, while he retained her close to his for near a minute. Not a word was spoke. Then glancing her eye at his flung arm, she pressed his other hand, and turning to Mrs. Byron, with a pearl straying over her cheek, she spoke her thanks.

Sir Theodore, delighting in his daughter, presented her separately to each of the ladies who, embracing her affectionately, signified, by their eloquent looks, how happy they were in such an acquisition.

Miss Mandville was tall, and very like her father; extremely graceful; endowed with that natural ease which is not to be acquired.

Their mutual joy, and occasional compliments did not prevent Mrs. Byron's observing, that her patient was all this time standing in the damp hall; so taking the hand of her fair guest, she led her to the parlour, and placed her beside her father, on the antiquated couch, near the fire.

Tea and coffee were called for; and Stephen seemed to have all the occupation to himself. Agnes did not appear; the truth was, she so buried herself in complimenting Miss Lucy, and bestowing and arranging the numerous parcels and boxes, asking ten thousand questions, and declaring her disgust at this old haunted castle, as she called it, that she could not admit of any other thought for the present; besides Lucy had confided a secret to her charge, that she had bound her to keep till eleven the next day, which alone would have possessed her imagination.

The evening passed in the common topics of what was doing in the great world; and Sir Theodore proposed that, as they now had the carriage, they should avail themselves of seeing every thing worthy

worthy account in those parts ; and as C—— races were to be the next week, he was desirous they shou'd all go to them. This however was undecided on the part of Mrs. Byron.

At eleven o'clock Gertrude and Julia attended Miss Mandville to her chamber. She cast her eye round, at the elevated tester, touching a ceiling near twenty feet high, covering a bed, in whose proud alcove many a Welsh knight had solaced, when disemburthened of his heavy armour.

The tapestry still displayed the damsel, with the head in the charger, and the immense chimney, though now filled with crackling faggots, seemed as if it would admit the retreat of a banditti within its precincts. The royal purple hangings of this bed, which had formerly been the state bed of the Orwell family, by time, assisted with the shade of candle light, did not ill resemble that covering given to a defunct, commonly called a pall. Altogether, Gertrude began to draw a conclusion from the expressive extent of Miss Mandville's features, that either a participation of her own chamber, or becoming her bed-fellow, would be a motion gladly assented to.

Julia addressing her, said, " This sumptuous apartment seems to cause you much speculation : There is an awe always attendant on grandeur. I wonder now whether the good Lady (my Lord's great grandmother) did not receive her congratulatory visits, on the birth of a son in this very bed ? "

" I should rather believe," said Miss Mandville, " that it had been removed from the tower, after the poor little boys had been smothered in it."

" You cannot, impressed with such an idea, sleep very well in it," said Gertrude ; " so, if you please, as it is very large, I will divide it with you."

" You cannot do me a greater favour," replied Miss

Miss Mandville ; " for though I am not afraid, my nerves are not strong enough to repel every idea that might keep me waking in this too respectable chamber."

Julia then bidding them take care of my Lady Dowager, if she came rustling in her silk gown, departed ; and they seated themselves by the fire, and insensibly fell into that conversation which explained why Mrs. Byron's family resided there.

All this was before known to Miss Mandville ; for her father had taken a delight to acquaint her with every circumstance he knew, concerning his amiable friends, by letter ; so that she was prepared to love them before hand.

A gentle tap at the door now alarmed them ; but Lucy very respectfully demanded pardon for an unwitting offence : Not knowing her Lady had retired, she and Agnes had began a game at cribbage ; and as the servant's apartments were removed so distant it is no wonder that the transactions of the parlour did not reach the housekeeper's room, which Agnes had put in order, for the reception of Miss Lucy ; and indeed she might have remained in ignorance much longer, if Sir Theodore had not summoned Stephen to help him to bed.

Miss Mandville dismissed her, with an assurance that she was not angry ; and Lucy betook herself to the copartnership of Agnes's bed, in a small chamber, within Mrs. Byron's ; for, as there was no conquering that unaccountable timidity this great old mansion inspired, Mrs. Byron endeavoured to soften it as much as possible.

There was no need of soporifics to any of our party, even Mr. Smith's bottles remained untouched by Sir Theodore.

It was nine the next morning before they assembled

bled in the breakfast room; but they made up for the time lost in sleep by their vivacity and sprightly conversation. After breakfast Lucy and Agnes entered, loaded with boxes, each with its particular direction written on it, and each containing a variety of ornaments in the most fashionable taste; so well chosen, and so well adapted, that it was impossible not to admire the fancy and judgment of the donor.

Miss Mandville presented each, as the boxes were addressed to her young friends, and her own picture, set in gold, to Mrs. Byron.

Acknowledgments took their turn in filling up the next half hour; after which it was proposed, as the morning was fine, and an October sun brightened the prospect, they should emerge from their confinement, which had lasted ever since the accident. Horses were procured for the young ladies, and Sir Theodore and Mrs. Byron took the carriage.

In these excursions they passed three or four mornings, seeing all, and more than all, worth looking at; and Mrs. Byron had, by the repeated persuasion of Sir Theodore, given her consent to the scheme of visiting C—— during the races; that is, some of her family should accompany Miss Mandville; for she repeated to him, that her present situation in life precluded her enjoying those gay scenes, though she could not refuse her daughters an introduction to the world, under such a protector.

"And now, madam, shall I claim a promise you once made me?" rejoined the Baronet. "You can never have a better opportunity; we have still six miles to reach home, and I hope I am neither impertinent or inquisitive enough to be refused."

"My

" My life affords so little entertainment," replied Mrs. Byron, " that it will be dull and uninteresting to relate it ; yet you have a claim on my word, and I will not forfeit that which even in trifles, I hold sacred.

" The only surviving child of four, I became, at an early period, of so much consequence in the affections of my parents, that a kingdom, or the whole world, would not have purchased me from them.

" I was born in Scotland, but soon became a citizen of the globe, retaining no partiality for any place, being accustomed to change very often; for though my father was neither a strolling player, or king of the gypsies, he belonged to that unsettled element which tosses a man up and down, here and there, from Indus to the pole; in fine, he was a Captain in the navy, and so passionately fond of my mother and self, that we were sent for to every port where he harboured ; nor were his affections confined to us alone ; he had a heart and purse open to every necessity of his fellow creatures ; consequently spent his fortune as soon as it was got : Nor could his own reflections, or my mother's remonstrances proscribe that philanthropic sentiment, whose tide bore down prudence before it.

" I received an education, and mixed in society far beyond what I had a right to do ; and in train to be a Duchess, had my father then died, I must have been a beggar.

" My mother, a sensible and prudent woman, yet was so prepossessed in favour of her own opinions, that nothing could turn her ; and, as in general, she was right, it was at that time of very little consequence, though afterwards it was the cause of all my misfortunes.

" At

" At the close of a war, my father left the navy, and with a desire to do his utmost for me, accepted an employ in the Indies. It was a painful separation, but promised to be short; for we were, my mother and self, to join him as soon as he had settled a house and equipage for our reception.

" At this time my heart had felt an attachment to the second son of Sir A—— M——; and though his expectations were not more golden than my own, we looked forward in the hope, that a few years would put it out of the power of poverty to keep us asunder.

" I had also an admirer of a different cast; a veteran Colonel: War had been his profession from an early day, and sword and plunder his delight. He had amassed money, and now wanted a wife, and an heir,—neither of which was my intent to find him. He was always at my mother's elbow, and so ingratiated himself with her, that she blamed my conduct towards him exceedingly. ' Why should I slight, she would say, so good an establishment? he would idolize me; hinting, at the same time, that nothing permanent could arise from my attachment to Mr. M——, who was always in the great world, and too dissipated for a serious tie. Alas! the tie was already broke! and as we were then at C——, about ten miles from London, a letter came the next morning, to my mother, from his brother, informing her that he had breathed his last, in consequence of an unlucky accidental blow on his temple, designed for a Captain P——s.

" That blow struck me also; stunned for some hours I spoke not; but at length broke out in lamentations that overwhelmed myself; till grief, taking her various courses, diminished into indifference for every thing.

" This

" This was the moment for my mother's views: I cared for nothing but to give her pleasure; and that day twelvemonth I was Colonel Gordon's wife.

He was extremely fond, as I then thought, of me; but it was vanity all. I was very young, and, though not handsome, had many lovers and he was proud to be the chosen one at fifty.

" I could have loved him out of gratitude had not the mask dropped off too soon. After six months he was seldom at home; cards, assemblies, and plays, were his evening occupations, and riding all the mornings.

This astonished me: Surely, said I, in thought, this man and I have changed places: His delights are in the amusements fitted for my age; and I pore over books, and sit whole hours at my studies.

" I wrote to my mother. She made me a visit; and observing his strange conduct, she remonstrated with him; he grew sullen, affected business, and took me with him to G—.

Leaving her in my house in town, in so rude a manner, affected my spirits. He tauntingly reproved me, and I retorted not quite gracious.

" My poor mother left England soon after full of self reprobation at the part she had acted, in bringing about such a marriage; but endeavoured to make it up by constant remittances and costly presents. Almost every year I made an addition to my family, and in the twelfth after my marriage became a widow.

" As I never was permitted to know any thing about my husband's affairs, I could not tell now I was left; but on examination found three hundred a-year to be the extent of my income, with four daughters to educate and establish.

" My children being entitled to about a thousand pounds

pounds each (left them by their grandfather) were then wards of chancery ; and I made an application about two years after, to be allowed some addition towards their maintenance.

" While this was agitating my father and mother both died ; and having lived in a style that demanded the extent of their fortune, the regret at so heavy a loss was almost all that came to me at their decease. But this was only a prelude to what was to follow, as motives for eternal grief.

" A distant relation, and once very humble servant of mine, arrived in London, from Bengal. Twice he had suffered shipwreck on his voyage home, and had lost almost all his property by the seas. He came to see me, and pity for his misfortunes made me attentive to him. He failed not to regret his inability to remain in London, from want of money ; as he doubted not, could he be on the spot, he might, by application and friends, get an appointment in the land he came from.

" I offered my house, my table, if that could conduce to remove part of his inconvenience. It was accepted. He took his stand at the great man's levee all the morning ; at night he instructed my children,—read to me,—mingled in my sorrows,—and seemed to attach himself to my dearest interests. He was lovely in his person, soft in his manners ; in short, in less than a year I was privately married to him ; and I still continued my solicitations to the Chancellor, for an addition to my income, under the plea of a widow.

" An appointment was, at length made out for my husband, and a ship ordered to carry him out.

" He left me—disowned me ; nay, absolutely married another ; and his death, which happened soon after, did not do away from me the sarcasms

casms thrown on my blighted reputation, by his denial of his first wife, in order to quiet the conscience of a second."

C H A P. IV.

MRS. BYRON threw her handkerchief over her face, and leant back against the carriage. Sir Theodore blew his nose, and hemmed. No one spoke; the carriage drew up; Sir Theodore alighting, offered his well hand, and involuntarily compressed the unnerved hand of Mrs. Byron: it was felt as pure as it was given,—it was such a pressure as charity bestows with its gifts to the deserving: It was more---it was less,---it *was* a squeeze, ---but it was from *such* a man to *such* a woman.

As the young ladies had been at home some time, they approached with a large packet to meet Sir Theodore.

Alicia, knowing by the superscription it came from her brother, had scarcely refrained from breaking the seal, which had been between her finger and thumb, for at least half an hour.

The operation being performed, without tearing an atom of the writing, Alicia peeped over her father's shoulder, and followed with a greedy eye each well-traced line, till at length arriving at some anecdotes of an Indian nymph, which Theodore confided to his father, who treated him like a brother.

ther. She withdrew to the window, blaming her curiosity, and preparing to stand a laugh.

Her father calling her to him, desired her to finish what she had begun. She, blushing very much, declined it.

"As you passed the worst, the story was well worth concluding," said he; "so I insist on your going on."

She read as follows: "In one of my excursions up the country, about the middle of last month, I made a visit to one of my Indian friends; and overcome with the heat, I strolled in the evening to some palm trees. Just as I had turned into a winding of the avenue I espied a fine, well made Indian girl, posting away before me. I quickened my pace, which, without turning, she observed, and advanced with equal speed. By some accident her dress caught, or she trod upon it, and fell. I darted forward, and fell also to the ground, and detained her, when, (judge of my surprise) she presented a bayonet, just drawn from under her cloaths, and I expected every instant she would dispatch me. The voice of a man in English, called out, You are a Briton! Truly, I am, said I, in no voice of thunder. Then, rise, quoth the damsel: your colour has saved you. Despair, continued she, had almost deprived me of the power of observing your face.

"I was taken prisoner two months ago, and by the compassion and attachment of a poor girl, got off in this disguise. I have travelled till fatigue has almost conquered me, through bye paths, and woods, and wastes, and now solicit your assistance, if you have either power or will to serve me. My name is St. Clair,—and ——"

Gertrude made but one step, and shutting fast the door behind her, ran through the garden,

down the elm walk, up to the walnut-trees, where crying, as if her heart would break, her mother, found her.

As she seldom interfered, or attempted to subdue those starts of affection which sometimes would break forth, in spite of her better reason, she placed herself beside her daughter, on the same mossy seat, and taking her hand, waited in silence, till the voice of filial love broke forth in an excuse for all the uneasiness she occasioned her mother. They then arose, and taking a round from the walnut-trees, crossed a meadow, where they were agreeably surprised to meet their friends, who were taking a turn till dinner should be served.

An oblivion of the last hour's occurrences seemed to have taken place; and the remarks on the beauty of the day, at such a season, and other common place conversation, gave a relief, till the dinner bell, which Mr. Stephen had found means to set in motion, produced much laughter and some surprise.

I think, reader, that the aforesaid Mr. Stephen, though introduced to your acquaintance, has not been treated with that exact justice his merit demanded.

In my account of persons of the drama, he seems to have been forgotten; let me double my assiduity in making up for this omission, by going back to the time his mamma wrapped up his sturdy limbs in a blue flannel, and by variety of exercises, either on her back, when she went abroad, or in an oak cradle at home, soon brought him to that perfection of stamina, which, at a very early age, his papa inured him to take part in those works, in the tin mines in Cornwall, in which he himself made a distinguished figure.

His

His education was not quite so much attended to as his talents for learning deserved ; and reading, writing, or casting accounts, were, in his profession, set at nought. He rose to manhood speedily, but love, the destroyer of high and low, set a mark upon him as a victim. His figure truly seemed to defy an urchin's power ; being five feet six inches high, and nearly, in circumference of shoulders, as broad ; his arm, accustomed to supply that force which twists up a poker, or rolls up a pewter plate, could not be supposed to reduce its compression to the gentle pressure of a female finger ; neither could a fierce round black eye be thought capable of a tender glance, any more than a swarthy complexion shew the emotion of the soul within.

Without studying any of these effects, he saw the damsel with the frothy beverage emerge from the cave of darkness. She presented it to him with a grin ; he took it with a nod ; and after the usual deposit, returned home.

Next night he drank a double draught of beer and love : So night, succeeded night, till, luckless hour, a rolling drum was heard. The serjeant's voice proclaimed, honour and riches. Stephen arose ; thought crowds on thought, and India's golden shores were brighter than his mines of tin. Truth was, Stephen was sick of love ; for Nan was faithless,—and constancy was not for Stephen : He braved the deep,—the burning sun,—the chilling damp,—the storm of war,—till an unlucky shot took off his thumb ; he was discharged. Alas ! poor Stephen. He offered his services to the lacqueys of Sir Theodore. He was diligent, and to be depended on. This recommended him to the butler, and once, in an affair of trust confided to him, acquitted himself with so much

zeal, that he grew into the knowledge of his master, whose fortunes he attached himself to, so that in a few years he became necessary, in spite of some peculiarities that might have been dispensed with.

In the first place, he would speak, where he thought he was a competent judge of the subject, before any body ; particularly if *war* was the topic.

His language was true Cornish, and very unpolished ; he was in constant terror of apparitions and forewarnings, and fond of dealing his blows where he thought correction necessary ; and his arguments, in that way, were so powerful, that few of his comrades chose to differ in opinion with him. He loved his master, and every body else must do the same with Stephen. He idolized his young Lady, and sorrow took the man who did not worship her. And as he had a sort of humour of his own, which they often rewarded with a smile, he had applied a new cord to the dinner bell, and played it off on the present occasion, with a view to display this same wit he was so fond of. He bowed, and looked important, as they entered the house.

" You did very right," said Mrs Byron, " to sound that bell, so long in disuse; and in future I desire it may always announce to my neighbours, when I am going to sit down with your master and mistress: for in any other case, it shall remain in that silent state you found it. This will be the means of making it grateful to my ear."

After dinner Sir Theodore resumed the proposal of taking the ladies to C—— races : and as it would be necessary to have a day before them, he named the day after the next for their departure. He promised to return within the week, and begged

ged to have as many of her daughters as Mrs. Byron could spare.

After acknowledgments from both parties, it was fixed that Miss Gordon and Julia should accompany the Baronet and his fair daughter : Mrs. Byron not judging the rest of an age for such an excursion.

At the hour of retiring, Gertrude and Alicia (who by this time had formed an intimacy that promised a longer duration than most female friendships) drew their chairs to the fire : and Alicia could not resist resuming the subject of the letter from India, requesting her friend to give her that confidence she promised never to deceive.

Gertrude, above the common girlish forms used in such a deposit, made her acquainted with every circumstance concerning her engagements with Mr. St. Clair : and was rewarded by a sincere wish, on the part of her friend, that he might return, loaded with honour and riches.

Gertrude sighed, and from the late intelligence drew no very happy presage of either. She declared, that she had endeavoured, on her mother's account, to make up her mind to every event, and that, unless by surprise, her feelings were kept to herself. She had struggled, by employing her mind constantly, as much as the nature of the case would allow of, not to give birth by indulging contemplation to distressing ideas.

Alicia was more and more charmed with her candour and good sense, and determined to persuade Gertrude and Julia to return to London with her for the winter ; but she forbore to mention this subject till a more suitable opportunity.

C H A P. V.

THE next day was spent in arranging articles of dress to be taken with them, and Agnes was not to be seen in the kitchen. She was so busy, so sanguine, so talkative, so delighted, that one might have supposed she herself was the Lady to be brought into public. The consequence was, the beef was over-roasted, the fowls all to jelly, and the pudding all abroad. A reprimand sat in the eye of Mrs. Byron, but went no further; and at four the next morning Agnes was stirring to get every thing in advance, that she might not lose a moment in exerting her good offices for her young ladies, at their time of rising. She was truly sorry to part with Lucy; but the hope of renewing their acquaintance, more permanently had been hinted to her by Miss Lucy, whose Lady had said she was determined, if possible, to draw Mrs. Byron from this dismal retreat for good and all.

As C—— was not above thirty miles from Orwell Manor, they did not set off till about eleven o'clock; and though the distance was short, and the time they were to stay, not long, yet at parting they all looked blank; which Sir Theodore observing, begged and entreated Mrs. Byron to go with them; but she still excused herself, being sincere when she assured him all her pleasure would be marred by leaving those who were behind.

They set off with the addition of an hired post-chaise:

chaise ; one of the ladies taking their turn to accompany Lucy ; and arrived at six in the evening at C--- ; where a double bedded room was chosen by them, and other accommodations secured by Sir Theodore, for their ease and convenience.

Gertrude was acquainted with these scenes, having been in public with her mother, but to Julia every thing was a subject for wonder. She said little, 'tis true, but her imagination was on the stretch ; she longed for the moment of action. Her sister saw through her expressive countenance every idea that passed within : and she and Alicia diverted themselves, by anticipating to her a thousand things not likely to happen. They told her she would have to encounter many Sir Hargrave Pollexfens, and declared she had better pass for the bride of Sir Theodore, or she certainly would be run away with. All this she took as it was meant : not fearing, when the time came, any man would presume to insult a Lady, without some previous encouragement, when under the care and protection of her respectable friend.

At length the happy day arrived, nor were the hours idly spent in sleep. Julia would by no means suffer her companions to lose those pleasant ideas she conceived would attend their being awakened ; and they all arose and proceeded to business.

As Sir Theodore was nearly recovered, he determined to go to the ground on horseback ; and certain of meeting many of his acquaintance, his principal pursuit was to find out a party to join his protegées.

The chariot was to carry them, and himself to be their escort, with 'Squire Stephen behind.

Sir Theodore had been much used to eastern pomp, and did not greatly relish the humility of his

his present appearance ; but while he stayed at the Manor, he could not think of incumbering Mrs. Byron with a numerous retinue ; and it was scarce worth while to send for servants, merely to grace an appearance at C—— races.

The company were more numerous than usual ; but whether Ganymede, Sly-boots, or Miss Jenny beat the course, I never could learn ; by which I conclude, my young friends had other matters to occupy their attention ; though they protested it was quite charming, and the jockeys dress very becoming.

Sir Theodore soon found out Lady Middleton, who, with her maiden sister, daughter, and niece, were sitting in their carriage, spectators of the race. He immediately rode up, and was most joyfully recognized by her Ladyship, who instantly inquired if Miss Mandville was there ? Being informed she was, Lady Middleton was impatient till the carriage could move round towards theirs ; where, ordering her coachman to draw up to the side, many were the congratulations on this fortunate rencontre.

Miss Middleton was delighted to see her old school fellow, Alicia, and it was concluded, after arranging themselves for the ball, they should call on them, and proceed together, under the auspices of Lady Middleton, to the rooms.

The first day's business of the field being over, they separated ; and now the toilette began.

Gertrude was arrayed in a clear unspotted muslin, flowing in waving folds of light and shade behind her ; a turban of the same, chained in its plaits by some elegant pearls, presented her by Alicia, who herself, wore an embroidered dress of Indian work, peculiarly elegant, which her father had brought her, with a helmet, cap, and plume,

plume, tassel of brilliants. Julia wore a dress like her sister's; no cap, her hair in ringlets, and a fillet of pearls separated the curls before.

Thus attired, Lady Middleton did not suffer them to be long in expectation, but attended them to the ball.

Shall we enter at once? or shall we wait, and listen to the hard thumping of Julia's heart, which would verily have made no bad concert to the pipe instead of the tabor; but more company pressing behind, Sir Theodore gives his hand to Lady Middleton, and in they all go together.

The lights, music, noise and bustle of arrangement, had well nigh overwhelmed our novice: Oppressed with a delight so new, she scarcely breathed, till being all placed, Sir Charles Newman, master of the ceremonies, approached, and making his compliments to the seniors of the party, was presented to the sisters, and he assured them he should be happy to hear they were not engaged, as he should have the merit of obliging some choice friends, by procuring them partners.

There being no minuets, the company were soon marshalled, and the ladies being provided for, Lord Maldown handed Alicia; Sir Henry Bridgemore led up the gentle Gertrude; and Lord John Raymond presented his hand to Julia, whose tremor redoubled at the idea of dancing before such an assembly; Lord John perceived her agitation, and stationed her beside her sister, notwithstanding many dry looks and oblique inuendoes of those couples that intervened.

She acquitted herself wonderfully, in her acknowledgments to her partner, though in a tremulous voice; and he thought he had never seen so much beauty, innocence, and elegance, mingled together before.

When they reached the top, he asked her many questions, in order to take off her attention on her first setting out, by which means she performed a merveille; but not being accustomed to so many couples, added to the various sensations that had agitated her through the day, her breath failed; she staggered to a chair; and his Lordship dreaded her fainting, as she could not speak. There were instantly a croud of idlers about her, offering their services.

This, and the few instants repose, recalled her spirits and, casting a disdainful look on those she thought impertinent, offered her hand to Lord John, desiring him to conduct her to Lady Middleton, that she might immediately clear up any appearance of affection on her part, assuring him, that never having been in so large a company before, she was not in the habit of going down so long a set. His Lordship observed, he could never conceive an English country dance, of forty, or even twenty couples, as an amusement for any female, above a milk-maid, who, when she arrived at the bottom, was not a bit the worse, though her dres was rumpled, her hair blowfed, and her face crimson; but how a delicate woman of fashion could throw herself willingly into the like predicament, astonished him.

Julia, who still dreaded the idea of seeming affected, blamed herself, and began her apologies to Lady Middleton, and Miss Mandville, with great force, but when Gertrude joined them, she told her, she insisted on her not attempting the dance, but join in cottillions, in the next room; to which they adjourned, and made up the set of themselves.

This was perfectly to the taste of their partners, who were very particular in their affiduities.

Six

Sir Theodore was always near them; not choosing cards, lest they might meet the smallest neglect, and he and good Lady Middleton conversed almost the whole evening about his fair friends, of whom he could not say enough.

Her Ladyship had been many years a widow, with a fine fortune, and, fond of her relations, had remained single for the very purpose of giving happiness to those who were under her protection: viz. her daughter, sister, and niece. The first was very amiable, and shortly to be married to Lord Duncairn, a Scottish peer; her sister so extremely sentimental, that no human being was refined enough to gain her heart; like our heroine of Marmontel, she sought a sylph in wedlock; unhappily for her, these ariel beings having taken leave of these domains with dear regretted Pope, she sought in vain, and at thirty seven, withered on the virgin thorn. She really possessed many amiable qualities, but that romantic turn of thought made her too often the subject of ridicule.

Miss Farrington was plain in her person, and of fallow hue; given to flattery, condescending to serve her own purposes, very cunning, wishing much for an establishment in the way of matrimony,—being dependent on her aunt, who really was very kind to her, though no favourite with the rest of the family.

The partners and the party left off dancing to take some refreshment.

It required no great penetration to see Lord John was smitten with one of those arrows let off by god Cupid, in playfulness, at those meetings which bring people from all corners in heterogeneous medley.

Julia, who spite of glances, sighs, &c. could not conceive any man could be really enamoured by a

few

few hours conversation, received his devoirs with as much indifference as if she had been used to play of these sort of attacks, and when he solicited her hand for the next evening, she assured him she was not positive of being at the ball, and could make no engagements.

He felt mortified, yet was astonished how any woman could refuse him. Was he not the handsome accomplished Lord John Raymond, whom all the women sighed for?—Piqued, but not dismayed, he trusted to his own talents for the next evening's happiness; and in handing Julia to the carriage, asked Sir Theodore if they did not intend gracing the next evening's ball; but he would, with his permission, wait on them in the morning, to be informed of the designs for the day.

Sir Theodore acknowledged his politeness, feeling, at the same time, that the brother of a Duke could take a liberty a smaller man would be condemned for; but as he himself was the most polite man breathing, he considered that the acquaintance would cease on their quitting C——, and that in two days the progress of assurance could not be of much consequence.

Not a little fatigued, they retired to bed; and as soon as they could escape the heavy grasp of Somnus, they arose.

Young Ladies having always a vast deal more to do than is necessary, on the like occasions, Julia had a thousand different fancies to try in the ornaments of her head, before the hair-dresser came. Miss Mandville had a new dress to exhibit; and Gertrude had a letter to write to her dear mother, with an account of the whole proceeding since they quitted Orwell Manor.

C H A P. VI.

WHEN they joined Sir Theodore at breakfast, he was in so immoderate a fit of laughter, they could get no explanation from him, till having composed himself with numberless efforts, he began as follows :

" Hearing that your Ladyships were not visible, I proceeded to the Star, to ask my good friend, Lady Middleton, if she was inclined to matronize you to-night again ; if not, I should apply to Mrs. Berkley ; when, lo, all was hushed in their apartments ; and Mrs. Wilson informed me, her Lady had been disturbed all night, by an unlucky accident, which had happened Miss Mortimer ; that it was only about two hours since she went to bed. What could this be ? was the next question. Why, indeed, Sir, answered Mrs. Wilson, I scarce know how to tell you, but you have known the family so long, that you cannot be unacquainted with the extreme delicacy of poor Miss Mortimer, who, from the stupid carelessness of her maid was led into an unlucky adventure last night ; for which, however, she is dismissed. Sally, Sir Theodore, had stirred up her Lady's fire, turned down her bed, and, as she thought, locked her door ; returned to a party of us servants, to a game at loo, till the ladies came from the ball. When they came back, she lighted her Lady to her chamber ; and though she found she did not unlock the door, by applying the key ; yet she took to notice of it, but setting down the candle, (as Miss Mortimer never

never suffered her to see her undress) asked if she had any further commands, and disappeared. Miss Mortimer, after laying aside her clothes, again clothed her in a long, muslin chemise, fast at the neck and wrists, and so long, that how she manages to get in and out of bed, I never could find out.

" Going round, she undrew the curtain, (the bed being in rather a dark corner) and stepping up, trod on a man's leg; who, not liking the pressure, called out, Halloo! She screamed dreadfully, and endeavoured to retreat; but her long train impeding her, she fell right upon him; a scuffle ensued, which should get off the bed first; but the poor Lady would not be persuaded to listen, but screamed the more; so he took her up in his arms, and unlocking the door, called aloud for help, as he feared she was in fits.

" I had undressed Lady Middleton (who spends sometime at her prayers) yet I ventured to open the door. When the man saw me, he posted away with his burthen, without saying a word, and laid her on the bed, in a swoon, as I believe.

" Her ladyship, in great terror, thought the house was on fire, and that this honest man had saved her sister. We both demanded what was the matter? When the man or gentleman declared no harm was done, only a mistake: That he had arrived in the stagecoach, at one in the morning; that they were allowed three hours to repose, before they proceeded. He had asked for a bed, but was informed not one could be had; that being greatly harassed that week, having the command of a press gang at L—, he was fatigued, and marching up stairs, was tempted to try the chamber doors; knowing these people of inns pay no great respect to stagecoach company.

Finding

Finding one room accessible, and unoccupied, at that late hour, he considered no further, but throwing his clothes on a chair, between the bed and the wall, fell into a sweet sound sleep; from which he had been awakened by some one treading, and then falling on him. He now begged pardon for frightening the Lady. The coachman called him, so, darting from my Lady's room, and catching up his clothes, they drove off in an instant.*

"Poor Miss Mortimer lay a long time, stifling herself with her tears, and declares the purity of her person is so defiled by the naked touch of the monster who carried her to my lady's room, that she can never think of being united to any body in matrimony, while on this earth."

"By her talk, indeed, Sir Theodore, one would think she supposes angels take wives. God help us! she is very odd indeed, though we all love her."

"My inclination to laughter," continued the Baronet, "is seldom so powerful as not to be kept within bounds; but these circumstances, so combined, excited every risible faculty; and I hurried away, leaving a compliment for Lady Middleton, and a promise to call again this morning."

A servant announcing Lord John Raymond, put an end to the subject. A simper ran through the company as he entered.

He was so perfectly a man of the very first world, that he took care his attentions should be so general as to avoid suspicion, or give offence. He offered his services to be their ciceroni for the morning, and added, his phæton would be at the door in half an hour.

Julia

* This is a true anecdote.

Julia took an opportunity to quit the room, for a few minutes, for fear of being singled out as his Lordship's partner for the morning as well as evening.

It is not to be supposed a young Lady could be disgusted by *les petits soins d'un homme galant*, yet Julia recollects on all occasions, she was Julia Gordon, and consequently ought to form no sanguine hopes from the singular attentions of Lord John Raymond.

This gentleman seemed very much disappointed to find the ladies not inclined to a morning excursion; he however attached himself closely to Sir Theodore, and they went out together.

He did not fail to inform himself, as far as politeness admitted, of the family and connexions of the Miss Gordons.

Sir Theodore went no further than saying they were daughters to a man of rank, in the army, and under his particular care.

This short, but pithy answer, conveyed all it meant in a moment to his Lordship; and as they parted, he begged to know if they were not to meet in the evening? Sir Theodore answered, his family intended to be at the ball.

The latter gentleman proceeded to make his compliments at the Star, and his Lordship vaulted into his phæton, when he had the honour of making his bow again to the divine Julia, through the window, as he passed along.

Lady Middleton received her friend with her usual good humour. They talked over the affair of the night; and her Ladyship laying the matter, as it really was, to mere accident, promised to leave Miss Farrington, to attend her aunt Mortimer during her confinement, and herself and daughter chaperon our young friends in the evening.

It

It is very certain poor Miss Mortimer was in a state of mind not to be reconciled to herself, till time should erase from her thoughts the recent injury she had, in idea, suffered. And as for the amiable Miss Farrington, her condolence rather added to, than diminished the sensation. Being mortified to remain at home with her, who was her very opposite in point of sentiment, she failed not by questions, hints, and conclusions, to torment this poor creature almost out of her senses.

Lady Middleton promised to be in time to accompany Miss Mandville to the race ground; and Sir Theodore returned home, to make the arrangements for the rest of the day.

Many calls and compliments were received by Miss Mandville, from her acquaintance; amongst whom Sir Henry Bridgemore and Lord Maldown left their tickets for Sir Theodore and the three Ladies; who were not a little delighted to find they should have Lady and Miss Middleton for the evening, preferring them to any other party, from their easy, polite, and affectionate behaviour.

C H A P. VII.

AFTER dinner, they, according to appointment, proceeded to the course; and the crowd being excessive, they, with difficulty, were forcing

ing their carriage, by backing and advancing, into the proper station, when a hired post-chaise, backing also, struck against the coach, and demolished the off window. Julia precipitately opened the door on her side and jumped out in her fright.

Lady Middleton's coachman, from noise and confusion, not perceiving what had happened, and terrified lest the shrieks from within the coach was occasioned by their dangerous situation, turned his horses out of the circle, and whipped them up for the opposite side of the course, leaving poor Julia environed by carriages of all sorts, and mob of all conditions.

She had presence of mind enough to keep to the rail, and stood in a mute sort of anguish, between fear and shame, while her sister and the rest of the party, endeavoured in vain to stop the coachman, who, the more they screamed, redoubled the lash, till they were fairly out of all crowd, in an open part of the plain.

Sir Theodore, who had been riding round the course, now saw something had happened, and galloped up to them; when what was his surprise to hear nothing but exclamations, and his daughter and Miss Middleton holding Gertrude, who insisted on getting out to look for her sister. He instantly heard enough to give him an idea of the spot to which he almost flew; but inquiry was then vain; it was the last heat; every body's attention was taken up, and no rational answer could be procured. At length, going up to one of those retailers of refreshments, who risk broken bones for the sake of their customers, he hastily described a beautiful young Lady belonging to him, that was lost in the crowd.

" Dear, your honour." replied the woman, " I saw her put into a cart, with her leg broke; and I suppose they have taken her home."

" Where

"Where is the cart? Which way did they go?" asked the half-distracted Baronet.

A voice called for oranges; and, making her way under the coaches, she left him unanswered.

He called after her in vain; she was vehemently protesting, she would not give *seven for sixpence*; and he turned his horse, not knowing what he did, to pursue his inquiries, of he knew not whom. He determined not to go back to the coach with such unsatisfactory tidings; so putting his horse to its speed, he made toward a cart that was moving off the ground, and soon espied a female figure in it; then adding spur to the willing steed, was in an instant near enough to see it was—not the lovely Julia, but an unfortunate young woman, whose curiosity had cost her a broken limb.

At any other time compassion would have detained our Baronet, but in the present case, he hastily flung a guinea, almost at the girl, and rode off again at full speed, making toward the coach, when he descried one of Lord John Raymond's servants speaking at the window, and soon after heard them all cry out, "She is safe? she is safe!"

Lady Middleton begged all explanation to be deferred till their return; and at the same time bid her coachman not lose a moment in conveying them to the Star.

In a very short space this was accomplished; and they were met, at the top of the stairs, by Julia and Lord John. The former flew to the arms of her sister, and every one in turn embraced her affectionately.

"It is a little hard, that I, who have been one of the principal actors, should be the only one denied the reward, said his Lordship. "I certainly have a claim."

"The

"The merit of a good act," rejoined Julia, "if stimulated by one sinister view, is for ever blotted: Remember, my Lord, the act of goodness is its own reward."

"Well said, my little Julia," said Lady Middleton; "but now tell us how we lost, and how we found you?"

"Dear madam, I am so ashamed of my folly! Pray, my lord, do you tell the story? Your politeness will speak more favourably of me than I deserve from myself."

"Willingly," said Lord John: "It is a tale not easily to be worn from my memory.

"I had not fixed myself to any particular spot on the ground, having betted on one of the horses, and was drawing round towards the winning-post, when my view was intercepted by a lovely figure in the midst of the mob, holding by the rail, and looking wistfully through the carriages. I instantly gave the reins to my servant, jumped out, and made my way toward her. I spoke to the coachmen, as I passed, who most of them knew me, and bidding them be careful, reached the 'frighted fair one. I spoke, but knew not what I said. She seemed scarce to know me. Taking her hand, to lead her out, she clung to the rail. There was no time for ceremony,—I caught her up, and bore her to my phæton; for in an instant all the carriages would have been in motion, the heat being just finished. I placed her beside me, and then she seemed less stunned, asking me if I was not Lord John!"

"Judging some accident had occasioned my meeting her in such a situation, I only asked her, if she would go home? leaving her to recover her scattered senses, which she very soon did, beginning by saying, My poor Gertrude? and then
she

she condescended so far as to take this hand, and sweetly said, You are very good, my Lord ! And I was very good, for I forbore to bend a finger, for fear of offending her. We soon reached home, and I dispatched my servant; but you know the rest.

" The hand that was offered me, I must possess this evening, at least for the dance. I submit to the company, if my request ought not to be granted : put it to the vote. *For the question, all,—against it none.*"

The ladies now proposed adjusting their dress for the evening, and withdrew.

At eight they went to the ball ; when Colonel Elwin solicited the hand of Miss Mandville, and Lord Clairmont engaged Gertrude, just as Sir Henry was going to ask that favour.

Lord Maldown made that compliment to Julia, but finding she was engaged, and to whom, retired in visible confusion. Julia also blushed, she knew not why ? but she did not like dancing in public, both nights, with the same gentleman.

Lord Maldown was one of those characters seldom found in high life,—very deserving, and very diffident. He had rivetted his ideas the whole preceding evening, on the singular style of beauty in the fair stranger, and thought he had never witnessed the breaking forth of so many charms, either at court, or in the country ; his disappointment was deeper, as he learnt the next day was fixed for their departure ; and perhaps he might never see her again. Mortified, he threw himself upon a seat, and forgot to seek another partner. He came to himself when the music stopped, and perceiving the Ladies were adjourning, to take some refreshment, followed them, and had the happiness of leaning his hand on one of the knobs

of

of Julia's chair, as he stood talking to Lord John at her back.

She, who had not failed to observe all his manœuvres, very graciously joined in the conversation ; which elevated his Lordship to a pitch of delight ; and he found courage to tell her, one single dance with her would compensate all his troubles, past or to come.

She bid him apply to Lord John, who consented with an air that plainly shewed he wished it was not asked.

Reader, my Julia is no coquette, unskilled in the ways of women, she felt a gratitude for the visible attention payed her, with such humility, and thought it necessary to make a return, such as her own heart had taught her : She thought no more ; and her steady adherence to decorum set a bound to any advantage being made of her innocence.

Miss Mindville and Gertrude failed not to cast significant glances at Julia. The fly laugh and half whisper gave her to understand they perceived her conquests.

'This she suffered, only answering, 'tis the follies of a day, and will be over to-morrow.'

In the course of the dance Lord Maldown asked if she did not visit London this winter ? and had the mortification to hear, she believed not. Did she reside very distant from the metropolis ? Yes, near two hundred miles. Was the town she lived in very gay ? No, she lived in no town, but in an ancient seat of Lord Orwell's.

"Lord Orwell," rejoined his Lordship. "He is my very near relation ; perhaps we are branches of the same stock."

"I fancy not." said Julia, wishing to put an end to this discourse. "Is it not a long time since we took our turn?" continued she. "They have missed us in the dance, I really believe."

They

They now mingled in the fantastic throng ; and Lord John soon appeared to claim the Lady, who was resigned with a profound bow and sigh.

As it grew late, Sir Theodore put them in mind, that they had danced a great deal the night before, —and he had given his word to return them to Mrs. Byron in high health.

Lady Middleton promised to accompany them, with her daughter, to supper; so answering a thousand farewells, they left the room, and returned to the inn; where Sir Theodore disclosed his intentions of entreating Mrs. Byron to consent to parting with these her fair daughters for the winter; which he hoped would not be disagreeable to them.

Miss Mandville, taking a hand of each, said, “ What a dear good papa ours is, girls. You shall go; and we and Mid shall have so much to do, —and we shall be so delighted.”

A most grateful look spoke more for our sisters, than words; but Gertrude pondered the matter in her heart, and thought of her mother, and, I believe, of somebody else.

They took an affectionate leave of Lady Middleton, who offered all her services when they should meet in the metropolis; and Stephen was ordered to hold all things in readiness for their return to Orwell Manor in the morning.

Julia slept but little during the night, but towards morning, dreamed of a masquerade, and saw Mr. Theodore Mandville in an eastern dress of immense value, lay his turban at her feet, and throw his mask behind him.

Lucy touched her: “ Madam, madam, breakfast waits.”

“ You oppress me, Sir; let us join my mother,” rejoined the sleeping maid.

“ Not

"Not before you are dressed, madam," rejoined Lucy, giving her a gentle shake.

"Is it you, Lucy? I thought it was——what's o'clock?"

She hurried on her clothes, and went down.

C H A P. VIII.

THEY set forth about eleven, and at the turnpike were accosted by the cavaliers of the preceding evening, who conducted them six miles on their way to Orwell Manor.

They were met about a mile from the house, by Mrs. Byron, Armenia, and Annette, who had walked forth, to abridge some of the distance between them.

The carriages stopped, and the Miss Gordons were in an instant in her arms; and Armenia, usually not given to talk, found a voice for inquiries. It is not to be described with what pleasure Sir Theodore surveyed this happy groupe. After giving them time for recollection, he proposed they should get into the carriages, and himself and party walk; but they all insisted on walking; so he gave his arm to Mrs. Byron and they arrived at the Manor; Agnes curtesying ten times in a minute, as the ladies accosted her; after which she flew round to the back door, gave Lucy a hearty embrace, and submitted her cheek to Mr. Stephen, who presented her a top knot, with a significant

significant grin, which she accepted with great good humour.

I am to tell you, Agnes looked a little higher than a footman ; and though her condescension allowed her to joke with poor Stephen, it was in consequence of his favour with her mistress, which perhaps he might have mistaken for some sort of encouragement to his tender inclinations for that *young lady*.

The day was spent in recounting the occurrences lately passed,—and the next, and the next, as happy as the former.

Sir Theodore had out-stayed his time, yet knew not how to part ; and the proposal of taking Gertrude and Julia to London was brought on the tapis.

Sir Theodore was under the necessity of going to his estate, which was his original design, to lay some plans for the next spring, and wished to take his daughter with him, whose taste he always indulged.

He therefore proposed, returning from Belle-pont in a fortnight, and calling for his young friends, in his way to London ; and begged of Mrs. Byron to allow them to pass the winter with Miss Mandville.

She paused, and after some minutes spent in consideration, thus addressed him :

“ I must be the most ungrateful creature breathing, if I did not confess the thousand obligations I owe you ; and to add to the score your late request is made, I am a bankrupt in every thing but acknowledgments ; yet I dread that this last desire of gratifying my girls, by the invitation you have given them, will only be productive of exciting inclinations I shall not be able to indulge, and raise their ideas once more above the probability

of realizing. I mean to convey a great deal to you in this short sentence : Need I give any further explanation?"

Sir Theodore rose, and taking her hand : " You need not, my dear madam ; I will imagine every thing your prudence would suggest ; but we look through different optics : I see your daughter's deserving the first establishment,—and, if I live, they shall enjoy it : Fortune has favoured me, —on you she has frowned ; make me your footstool, to reach at your deserts."

" My papa," said Alicia, " has the finest method in the world, of working up ones feelings : He never was angry with me in his life, and yet he has made me cry a thousand times ; he has raised a gust of passion in your breast, my dear Mrs. Byron, for which I shall pat his cheek ;—but we must have the girls, and so ends the matter "

True it was, Mrs. Byron's powers of utterance were impeded by a large lump in her throat ; which, however, this well-timed interruption of Miss Mandville's helped to diminish.

" And now," said Gertrude, " for my maiden speech in this honourable assembly ; I hold it not right, that this our Lady Sovereign should be deprived at once of so many of her privy council ; I therefore move, that only *one* at a time shall absent herself ; and that it is the business of these her prime favourites, to make her happy, by assisting her in the momentous task of governing this her little kingdom ; and bearing a part of her burthen."

" I cannot," rejoined the Baronet, " allow of that general murmur of applause this essay merits, * my gentle Gertrude, because I am selfish ; but I shall bring forward the motion again, I assure you, in spite of opposition."

" It

"It is a bad sign," she replied, "if the minister cannot carry his point."

The evening being far spent, they retired. Gertrude having left Julia in her friend's chamber, passed half an hour in conversation with her mother; which ended in procuring leave for Julia to go to London, for the winter, and permission for herself to stay at home.

Mrs Byron felt this instance of affection as it deserved; and following her daughter to the door, pressed her to her soul, but said nothing.

"Have you been reckoning your conquests, that are to be?" said Gertrude, as she entered the room.

"No, indeed," said Alicia, "I have been tampering with your sister, but there is no getting any thing out of her. I want her to confess, that she will be overjoyed to meet lord John in town, but she declares, she does not care for one of them. I believe neither her hour or mine is yet come."

"When it does," rejoined Gertrude, "you will pay for your boasting, Ladies."

"No, sister," said Julia, "I shall never like any man, even as well as I love your picture. I shall marry, I dare say, because other people do; but if it was not for being *singular*, I would as soon be as I am."

"You mean a bad pun, Miss Julia; so off, off, I say,—for I am inclined to sleep."

Julia departed, and the two Ladies reposed once more on the couch of royal purple.

Next morning brought a packet from St. Clair, giving a full account of his perils and dangers; mentioning also the great friendship of Mr. Theodore Mandville, and of a proposal he had received from him to quit the army; having a most lucrative

tive employ in his power, to obtain for him; but he added, his partiality for his profession, and a doubt of acquitting himself in a civil employ, kept him undecided; though he could not but recollect the deprivation of a leg, arm, or eye, was often the only memorial of a soldier's services; he owned it an infatuation, and concluded by saying, when he thought of Gertrude, the mist fell from his eyes; but when the trumpet sounded, the enchantment again took place.

Mrs. Byron was quite vexed, and wished it was possible to convey a whisper to his ear in the space of an hour; but in six months the place would be filled up,—and the love of glory get his head shot off.

Sir Theodore checked her vehemence, by saying, “It was, at St. Clair's age, a natural, and even commendable passion; but he plainly perceived, by his own manner of drawing an inference from that gentleman's letter, some *other* love would turn the scale from glory; and he doubted not, but at this time present, he had exchanged his sword for a goose-quill, to sign his name five or six times a day, for as many thousands a year.”

Gertrude kept her sentiments to herself; a sigh escaped, which was half stifled by a hem; and the letters being consigned to the pocket, repos'd to gather strength, for the fatigue they were to go through, by a thousand perusals.

And now was the time for Sir Theodore to bring forward his proposition. He was then made acquainted with their determinations, and was obliged to be satisfied with a promise from Gertrude, positively to engage herself to spend the next winter with them.

The morrow was named for their journey to
Bellefont

Bellepant (a name Sir Theodore had preferred to the original one, on account of its vicinity to a famous bridge in that part of the country;) and in a fortnight or sooner they were to return for their charge, and so proceed to London.

Matters being thus arranged, Stephen, having understood most of it from behind his master's chair, drew his seat a little closer to Agnes, and handing her a glass of ale, hoped she would drink to their next merry meeting; "and indeed, Mrs. 'Agnes,'" continued he, "it will be a happy one on my side; and I grieve to think, that after we comes to fetch Miss Julia, I shall not look upon thy pretty face again, for six long months. I am sure I feel just as I did when I left mother, for India; and more by half than when I gave Nan the last smack I ever had of her. Now, I was a thinking——What do you snigger at, Lucy? Because I ben't one of your powdered fops, with the cramp words, apeing their betters,—I speaks truth, and knows no guile. As I was a saying, Agnes, I have a rupee, which I will give thee for a keep-sake; and in the stead, will have this little lock of hair, to keep in the case of my watch."

Agnes jumped up, declared the bell rung, and was off in a moment. Lucy laughed most unmercifully, and Stephen went to bed in dungeon.

The next day separated this charming party, nor was there a dry eye in the house; and Stephen looked as if he had lost—his other thumb.

The family stood silent, with their bodies in the same position, till the winding of the road closed the scene; then all turned towards the house, where an unpleasant stillness, never observed before, seemed to reign.

Gertrude retired, to solace herself with her letters: Mrs. Byron desired the young ones to bring their

their apparatus for the morning's instruction ; and Julia went to examine her wardrobe, to assort her winter's apparel : none of which was done from the necessity of the case, but as a resource against the languid state of their minds : A very unusual sensation to this family. Gertrude, it is certain, had gone over her packet before Miss Mandville awoke ; and therefore could not be so very anxious for a reperusal so few hours after. Julia cared very little about her finery, as a few hours before her journey were more than enough to adjust all these personal cares. Neither was it the hour of instruction to the girls : as it was usually appointed for superintendance of domestic affairs by Madame. But all was wrong through the course of this day : The meal was dull : they wished for bed-time,— and even Agnes moped like a solitary owl.

C H A P. IX.

THE sun arose next morning ; the day was remarkably fine ; their spirits revived. After breakfast Gertrude tried her lute ; the plaintive air was delightful. A walk was proposed ; they strolled to the village, made many visits to the cottagers, who had been accustomed to their kindness, and returned to a cheerful dinner ; after which they danced, to instruct the young ones.

In the evening the book was brought and read till bed time.

You

You do not wish me to give you a diary, reader; as in one day you have the whole of a week's rotation, save, that the curate ate a very hearty dinner on the seventh day, and hallowed it. The eighth was agreeably interrupted by the arrival of a nephew of Colonel Gordon's, who, from family dissensions, had only lately made himself acquainted with Mrs. Byron.

He was a Captain in the army,—extremely handsome,—and very partial to his cousin Julia. As he was going on the recruiting duty, he made Orwell Manor in his way, and proposed remaining with them a week or two.

As he had never been at the Manor, his first exclamation was: "All hail, thou aweful mansion! and ye, the fair inhabitants, whether of heaven or earth, I pray ye, harm me not. In the name of all that's holy, how came ye here?"

"Even as other folks have come, George," said Mrs. Byron, "though at first not with the same inclinations: Those who come now anticipate meeting their friends, and we came to shild us from a fore enemy,—poverty; but proceed, and rest not here; you shall find it an hospitable roof; that is the oak parlour."

"First of all, my good aunt, I must send my servant and horses to the public house, and then I shall be tout a vous."

Mrs. Byron did not oppose him, as she knew not if all gentlemen's valets were as decorous as Stephen.

After a thousand questions and observations, that one was grown tall, and the other grown fat, and all extremely improved, which he had thought impossible, they informed him of their new acquaintances, and of Julia's intended excursion, at which he seemed not much delighted, saying, "I suppose, madam, you also go."

"No,

"No, indeed, I do not," said Mrs. Byron; "Julia must trust to the good example of her friend, and an inward monitor, for a guard to her conduct while absent."

Captain Gordon took a bandelore from Annette, and twitched it up and down with great velocity, and at last said, "Have they good hay at the inn, I wonder? I should not like my horses to be starved."

Julia gave him a pat on the shoulder, asking him if he remembered Mr. Meadows, in Cecilia?

"No, nor any other Mr. or Madam, when you are so nigh," said he, kissing her hand.

She blushed, and returned, "I see, Sir, though bearing a royal commission, you claim *privileges*, and assert the *Rights of Man*; both of which are my aversion."

"I do not wonder you scoff a poor soldier," rejoined the Captain: You will shortly, I suppose, suffer the speech of none but titled beaux."

"Very true, Sir; I shall admit your observation just, and the *title* of *friend* and *relation* will always stand foremost, I hope, in whatever situation I may be placed."

"Pray, go on with your squabble," said Gertrude; "it whets my sister's imagination. I have alway observed, that women display their minds with less constraint to men than to their own sex; whether trusting to the partiality of the one, or dreading the effect of competition, in the other, produces this unaccountable distinction, is not for me to decide; but it is certain I have made it a general observation."

"Shall I tell you a truth, Gertrude? if I do, you will call me flatterer: I then must asseverate, you of course, deny; which will only lead us, at last,

last, to say some very flat things. I wish the heads of many of our senators were as well stored as thine, and I will hear no contradiction."

The smell of some pigeon a la crapeaudin, announced supper; and the soldier dealt an angry blow at them, cutting them down the middle with as little remorse as an Austrian does a Frenchman; after which some few glasses of wine put him in train for most delightful repose, to which, pray, leave him till nine next day.

After breakfast battledore and shuttlecock, romping with the children, and general topics, filled up a rainy morning; dinner, chess, and tea, the afternoon,—and a game of commerce, to admit the young ones, brought them to supper-time. Boiled chickens and hot punch, to bed time, and sound sleep and pleasant dreams to the next morning; when they all set off on the scamper for —— Abbey.

The roads were dirty,—the waters out,—the horses hacks; but an adventure is always an additional satisfaction in parties of this kind.

Passing a stream, made by the late inundation, Gertrude's horse fancying some naiade, fell prostrate, and she was overturned, without any decorum, into the water. Julia let go the reins of her palfrey, who, not used to the shrill note of a fair Lady's scream, set off at full gallop, and bore her out of sight in an instant. Armenia had jumped off, and was up to her knees in the water, before the Captain could, through variety of sensations, disengage himself from his charger; who, not being used to so great freedom, kicked up his heels, and flew back to the village.

The servant, not five minutes before, had been sent forward, to have the old man that shewed the ruin, in readiness,—as he, like most other sons of

the church, had two *livings*, viz. sexton to a catholic burial place, and explanator to this huge *mass of stones*; which, had it not been for him, might have passed for nothing more intelligible.

Under all this combination of circumstances, Gertrude, not attending to any of them, scrambled till she got her head above the water; but though, by being raised on her hands, she could do this, the weight of her riding dress, pockets, &c. kept her down, and Captain Gordon and Armenia supported her out of the flood, dripping and shivering; the latter of whom was nearly as wet as herself.

There happened, fortunately, to be a cottage not very distant, to which they bent their course; and Gertrude having apparently received no present injury, the Captain pressed forward, and entering the cottage, desired Armenia to be spokeswoman.

He retired, as they thought, from delicacy, but he was no sooner out of sight, but mounting the miserable beast that had just emerged from the flood, he clapped both spurs to its sides, and set off in pursuit of Julia, before the sisters could have time to form any uneasy conjectures about her.

Armenia, excessively alarmed for her sister, undressed her as fast as possible, and she was soon attired in a cloth gown and petticoat, such as are worn by the Welsh paysanne; and the garment that approached nearest her charming self, was of red flannel. A coloured calico cap was kindly offered, but she rather chose to allow her tresses in the wind, than bind them up wet.

This being all done in the course of five minutes, Gertrude, looking round, asked for Julia? Armenia then recollectthe

the alarm, and were proceeding to the door, when Gertrude insisted upon her staying to dry her own clothes, and set off, with the daughter of the house, to look for the fugitive.

This immediate exertion was probably a means that prevented the bad effects of a cold bath, administered in such an odd way to our fair friend.

As they are not supposed to travel as fast as me, we will return to the Captain, seated on a side saddle, buffeting the refractory steed: First throwing his leg over, than placing it round the pummel, jumbled from side to side, by a scrambling pace between a trot and a gallop, and swearing, at the same rate, according to the proverb.

He despaired, running down the hill toward him, Julia, who, out of breath, called, before she could be heard, for Gertrude.

The Captain waved his hat three times round, in token of joy, and they soon met.

He satisfied her immediately, concerning her sister; and then, placing her on rosinante, led the creature toward the cottage, and within a mile of it, met the Lady in masquerade, when a general explanation took place.

Julia had tried every means to turn her horse, but the first outcry still rung in his ear, and he pressed on the faster. Mad with anxiety and impatience, she disengaged her foot from the stirrup, and slid off, at the risque of her brains being kicked out, and made the best of her way back, in a highland trot, to the scene of action.

The next business was to propose a plan. The servant appearing in sight, that moment Gertrude declared she would go on to the Abbey, spite of her odd figure.

All the cavalry being collected, except the charger, together in a few minutes, it was determined

mined that John should take one horse, to fetch Armenia, and his master ride John's.

This young Lady soon joining them, they proceeded much as before; only John marched to the quick time, instead of curveting behind the Captain.

Many trite observations were made, on their reaching the *ruin*; some wit flew about, and much morality; the *road* was punned upon twenty ways; and the memento of the power of time sighed over as often.

"Julia," said the Captain, "let's be gone. You are too handsome to reconcile the thought that you *can* change."

"And you too saucy," rejoined she, "my good coz, for even time to work a reformation."

Mounting their steeds, they now galloped away till they came to the hut; where Gertrude again put on her own dry clothes; and making a handsome present to these hospitable rustics they took the road to Orwell Manor, where, without further mischance, they arrived about five in the evening.

C H A P. X.

MRS. BYRON observing that Gertrude's hair was in much disorder, she was informed her hat had blown off into the water; a gentle reprimand followed, for venturing to put it on wet; and thus the matter ended.

The

The next day a servant arrived from Bellepont, with a letter and hamper of fine old arrack.

From the letter they were taught to expect their friends on the following day; but it also informed them, business in town obliged Sir Theodore to quit them in three days after. It concluded, by acknowledging the grateful sentiments felt, for their uncommon kindness, and assurances of its never being forgotten.

Mrs. Byron read the letter aloud; as it was her custom to communicate to her children all such intelligence.

Before she had half finished, Captain Gordon took up his hat and absented himself to taste the morning breeze.

Mrs. Byron wondered at his formality; Gertrude smiled; and Armenia whispered Julia, "I am sure he is angry."

Mrs. Byron again felt a palpitation at the idea of soon parting with one of her daughters, but forbore mentioning a syllable of it; as she knew the least intimation of her not being perfectly reconciled, would make Julia forego any pleasure.

She then went to see preparation made for the return of her friends, and thus dissipate a useless chagrin.

George Gordon had taken but a short walk. On his return to the parlour, he took up a book, which chanced to prove the Complete Housewife.

He continued poring over it for near a quarter of an hour, before he perceived he was studying,—An excellent way to hash a calf's head.

The ladies, who were at their work, seemed not to observe him, till he looked up, smiled, and threw the book away. They then all joined in a complete laugh against him, which he revenged, by throwing over the embroidery, making a ball

of

of Julia's fine open work, and putting into his pocket a famous needle book of Armenia's. This, however, was only an effort, for he continued thoughtful and absent all the day, and in the evening told his aunt he must bid them farewell to-morrow morning.

"And why so, nephew?" rejoined Mrs. Byron; "your intention was to stay a fortnight; and surely the appearance of our very best friends cannot frighten you away: I make a point of your not quitting us at this juncture."

"Your house will be occupied, madam; your servant hurried; and I *must* be an intruder."

"You have taken a disgust, nephew, at some unintended neglect; otherwise I cannot account for the change in your behaviour throughout this whole day."

George felt ashamed; he took his aunt's hand, confessed she was too kind to him, and promised to remain with her according to his first plan.

At four the next evening, the carriage appeared in the avenue; and little Annette flew to the rope of the dinner bell, and tugging with her whole force, produced such a peal as astonished and diverted the whole party. She had not forgot what her mother had said to Stephen; and her vivacity and good humour appeared on this occasion.

Alicia and Sir Theodore were in the hall in a moment; and while he was, according to the mode of a fine gentleman of the last age, saluting Mrs. Byron, she flew to Gertrude, and passing George Gordon, who caught her eye, as she embraced her friend, whispered, "That is St. Clair;" then quitting her, pressed Julia to her bosom.

Sir Theodore handed in Mrs. Byron with
his

his accustomed politeness, and by her received an introduction to the Captain. She afterwards presented him to Miss Mandville, who was not a little surprised at her mistake. A blush over-spread her cheek, as he payed his compliments. Her eye fell, and, for the first time in her life, she appeared awkward ; recovering herself, however almost instantly, her vivacity broke forth in a thousand lively sallies. She rallied them on the old mansion ; asked Captain Gordon if he had ever been permitted to see the curiosities of the manor ? if he had made an intimacy with the old gentleman in the haunted parlour, or slept in the state bed of the queen of Sheba ? To all this he was quite a stranger.

" Well then," continued she, " promise yourself great pleasure and profit. In the first place, Mrs. Byron, your nephew must see both chamber and parlour, that's certain ; and if he will break open the apparition's door, he will find, no doubt, such bags of gold, as I said before, as will produce great pleasure and profit."

" Alicia," said Sir Theodore, " you are so elated, at seeing your friends again, that you run on like a wild girl, as you are."

" Let me go on Sir Theodore," rejoined Alicia, " I shall tire myself in half an hour, and then you shall say all and every thing you are so capable of to these our dearly beloved."

" Including my cousin," said Gertrude, in a low voice.

Mr. Gordon asked if they had really been so absurd as to fasten up a room ? and was assured, that a parlour had been kept locked ever since the death of the earl's father.

" Why didn't you tell me this before, girls ? I would have laid siege to the barrier."

" By

" By no means, George," said Mrs. Byron ; " it would much offend Lord Orwell : I imagine it is the repository of old family papers ; which, at present, they have no occasion for, and yet don't choose to destroy : So set not your prowess against the ghost, lest dire mishap befall us."

As they had only three days to pass in this retirement, they were determined not to be idle : they rode, they danced, they sung, and made such a riot, that Mrs. Byron said, she should expect the ghost would pay her off, when left to his power, for the disturbance they must occasion him.

There is no situation so favourable to accelerate an intimacy as this, wherein our friends were at this period.

The Captain, from sheer politeness, was obliged to beau Miss Mandville, in preference to his relations ; and in these three days he was allowed to call her *cousin* ; and received an invitation from Sir Theodore, to visit them in town.

The morning preceding that appointed for the journey, Captain Gordon proposed sending to B—, for a coach ; and that his aunt, Gertrude, Armenia, and Annette, should go as far as Bath with them, himself attending on horseback. Sir Theodore seconded the motion ; Alicia entreated and the whole party became clamorous for Mrs. Byron's assent ; which she very unwillingly gave, premising she should not be persuaded to prolong her stay from home, when once they got her out of her retirement.

John was dispatched, by the Captain, to B—, who was very keenly eyed by Stephen, while he was taking his master's commands. Being a disciple of the first order of coxcombs, he cast a supercilious glance, in return, at the Cornish daw.

As

As he went through the kitchen, he chucked Agnes under the chin, which she very much resented.

Stephen, hearing the irritation of her naturally sweet voice, soon learned the affront, and firing with resentment, swore he would knock his white teeth down his throat, when he came back, and render him unfit for any sort of monkey trick for a month to come.

Lucy then interfered, telling him, that if he went to blows with the man, his master might take up the matter; and you, Sir, lose your place, (added she;) for Sir Theodore will never allow you to beat or ill use any body.

‘ I thought you would take his part, because he smelled so sweet: But, Mrs. Lucy, neither you nor your betters shall save his bacon.’

Agnes desired he would think no more about it, as ’twas likely, after a few days, she should never see him again.

He growled a sort of assent, and all seemed quiet.

About eight in the evening Stephen walked up to the public house; where this knight, of the order of puppies was stretched upon a wooden bench, lolling on one elbow, talking to the farmer’s daughter.

Stephen called for a tankard of beer; and while the young woman was gone to fetch it, he addressed this Adonis:

“ I won’t beat you, while you are down; but get up, and come into the yard, and I will let you know who I am; and teach you to put your ugly paws to the chin of one, meat for your master.”

“ You are extremely testy, friend,” cried the other; “ I meant no affront; but am not obliged to pay homage to your Dulcinea, or fall in love with the elegance of *your* deportment.”

Stephen

Stephen (really did not understand him, but from the ironical tone of his voice, concluded the purport of the speech) seized him instantly by the collar, and waistband, and carrying him out of the house, threw him souse into a pool that received every filth: where he left him, without saying a word, to struggle out how he could. Stephen's knuckles coming in contact with his windpipe, in conveying him to the pool, had almost choaked him; and he sprawled in this mirey bath sometime before he could get out. Bent upon revenge, he sat down to meditate, being ashamed to go into the house; he then determined to go down to the Manor, and enter by the hall door, and lay in wait for opportunity to present himself for redress. In that condition he watched through the casement for the moment.

He saw Agnes and Stephen carrying in the supper things, and, at last, the supper, into the parlour; and when he supposed the company were arranged, and occupied with the repast, he stole gently in, and knocked at the parlour door. Stephen opened it; and I believe would much rather have admitted the ghost; for clapping the door in his face, he looked so odd, that the whole company were alarmed.

A voice from without, named Captain Gordon; who, astonished at all this confusion, got up and opened the door; when, behold, the woeful figure of John presented itself, claiming justice against Stephen; who stood all this time, without relaxing one muscle of his face, silent against the sideboard.

The Captain, at first surprised, now burst into a loud laugh;—but Sir Theodore, rising from his seat, ordered Stephen to follow him. Stephen obeyed, but first cast a look at Gertrude, while every

every feature relaxed at once. She understood it, and went after them, just as Sir Theodore had stopped in the hall, and pronounced these words : “ Be gone, I have no further use for you !”

“ But I have, my dear Sir Theodore ; 'tis a trusty 'squire ; hear his defence ; and I stand hostage for his good behaviour.”

She then drew him back to the parlour ; Stephen following, crest fallen, at the thought of being turned away.

He was ordered to begin his defence, which he faithfully did, reciting every particular in his own language ; in which, however, he was interrupted very often by bursts of laughter from George Gordon.

Sir Theodore then begun : “ I shall pardon you this once, on the intercession of that Lady (a bow from Stephen to Gertrude;) but you are to make amicable overtures to the aggrieved, and submit yourself to the degree of punishment judged proper by Captain Gordon.

“ You are a very honest fellow,” said George ; “ pray, be friends with my booby ; he will learn modesty from you ; an attribute gentlemen of his cloth are little acquainted with.”

So ended the affair, with only this addition ; that when they retired, Sir Theodore gave Stephen two guineas, to give John towards reparation ; which he faithfully bestowed the next morning, adding a cordial shake by the hand, and a cup of reconciliation.

C H A P. XI.

AT ten the carriages drew up, and the chariot, coach, captain, and two footmen made no small figure parading through the village; and the farmer said to his man, "As sure as thou beest Roger Davis, ould madam is going to be married to that there 'squire of a loard, from Ingy, and theesum are all to be bridesmen and maids. Well, joy go we um, for she be a main goody Lady, thof the saiy she beant over rich."

These conjectures being unknown to Mrs. Byron, she acknowledged, with great attention, all the bows and curtesies till they were out of sight.

The journey was delightful, and they arrived by dinner time, next day, at Bath; after which a secret plan was formed, unknown to Mrs. Byron and Julia, that the Mandville party should set off at day-light next morning, to avoid taking leave.

George took upon him to hurry his aunt about to see different parts of the town; so that she should not have time to be sad; and Gertrude undertook every apology necessary to her mother.

Julia being awakened early, was informed of the design, to which she, at first, was very averse, but after much persuasion consented; and the carriages being ready, Sir Theodore took one hand and Alicia the other, while Gertrude ran away to her chamber, and shut them all out. Julia, thus conducted, went down stairs, and they drove off in a minute.

Now

Now reader,—beauteous reader,—gentle reader,—courteous reader,—choose which you please, for you must be apostrophized ; were we permitted to disclose all the internal movements which agitated the minds of *some* who had left the hotel, or *some* who remained behind, we might be called tatler. I do not tell you that Miss Mandville sighed, as she passed through the gallery on which all their chambers were ranged, or that the captain had an evil dream that made him start from his bed to peep at the window as they mounted the step of the chariot, or that he began to doubt whether love was not transferable ; and that it Could glow in the bosom of Alicia, when chilled in that of Julia. I do not tell you, I say ; but if from your own speculation, you divine all this, it probably *was the case*.

Armenia and Annette, who slept in their mother's room, arose ; Gertrude, in the next, heard their movement, and going to the door, was admitted ; when she disclosed the plot, and entreated Mrs. Byron's forgiveness.

At first she seemed surprised and vexed, but recollecting herself, patted her daughter's cheek, in token of reconciliation ; and they went to the breakfast room.

Captain Gordon took no notice of the past, but told his aunt she must give him her company that morning to the Abbey, from thence to the exhibition, then to the crescent, and in the evening to the play.

" On no consideration, nephew," said she, " I will go with you to the play ; as to the rest, take my daughters, and I shall write letters."

This did not answer the plan ; yet she would not be persuaded ; so he left her ; and taking his cousins,

cousins, led them such a dance as to return at four o'clock, heartily tired.

They had not too much time to dress and dine, before the hour arrived for going to the theatre.

Their hearts dilated with pleasure, and they were charmed with the neatness and decorations of the house.

The novelty of their faces and naivete of manners, procured them many admirers, if one might judge by the eyes of those who surrounded them.

They were placed in front, in order that nothing should obscure their view.

Mrs. Byron and Gertrude took the second row, and George Gordon rambled according to the fashion of young men, from fair to fair.

Toward the end of the second act, Gertrude saw Lord Maldown enter, with some other gentlemen. His eyes, wandering about, soon met those of Miss Gordon; a most profound bow followed; and as soon as the act finished, he made his way to their box. After the kindest inquiries for her health, he leaned forward, and hoped he was so happy as to see Miss Julia well.

Armenia, whose face had been turned to him, on hearing her sister accosted, blushed and bowed. She knew she bore a resemblance to Julia, but she did not know Lord Maldown was near sighted.

He wondered not at the cold return to his compliment; as he had before experienced that Julia was naturally indifferent; he was, however, interrupted in his silent comments, by Gertrude's presenting him to her mother, and then her sisters, Armenia and Annette.

The third act opening, he placed himself behind them

them, and in a whisper apologized for his blunder. He asked if they intended to make any stay at Bath ; but Mrs. Byron said, she thought of leaving it next day. Where did they reside at present ? At Y—— house. Would they, if they did not set off to-morrow, admit of his calling on them ? Certainly yes.

George Gordon came into the box just then. Another introduction took place : His Lordship expressed his concern at hearing the Ladies were to depart so soon.

"My aunt does not mean any such thing ; only she has a mind to enhance the favour," replied George. "My little cousins here must see the rooms, and I hope they will not think of departing till the week is out."

"Silence," said Mrs. Byron ; "I cannot attend to the play, child."

"That is only to get rid of importunity, madam," returned he ; "but if Lord Maldown will do us the favour to sup with us, we will join our forces, and attack your despotism."

"If you will be quiet," said she, "I shall be more likely to comply : Every body's eyes are upon us ; you make such a noise."

"Can a man," replied the Captain, "be in a more delightful situation ; all the charming creatures looking at him at once ; but it is your fault, aunt, for having such handsome daughters : That is the attraction, believe me,—it is not me they are looking at."

Lord Maldown would, at that moment, have given half his estate, to have possessed the modest assurance of the young soldier. He was an idolater at the shrine of beauty ; but it was silent adoration. He felt it an insult to tell the goddess of her attributes,—and dreaded the lightning of her eye would crush him for presumption.

The play being over, Lord Maldown presented his hand to Gertrude; and when they reached the lobby, offered the other to Armenia. George Gordon took charge of Mrs. Byron and Annette; and as he placed the ladies in the coach, he begged the Captain to partake of his chariot.

At supper solicitations were renewed, and Mrs. Byron so far yielded, as to consent to stay two days longer; but she declared she would not go to the rooms.

"Will you allow your daughters to go," said his Lordship, "with my mother? If you will, my sister shall wait upon them to-morrow,—and I will procure tickets and partners for them all."

It would have been ill bred to resist any longer; and she gave her consent with a politeness worthy of the attention she had received.

The rest of the evening passed in elegant conversation. No people were more capable of supporting it. Lord Maldown had fine sense, and great improvement; but from diffidence it was seldom displayed; as it is not often we meet with a party so well selected.

In the morning Lady Sophia Warton called, and Lord Maldown introduced Lord Clairmont, who had before been made known to Miss Gordon.

Lady Sophia was a lovely girl, though little in her person; the symmetry of which pronounced the equanimity within.

After the first compliments, Lady Sophia proposed the matter in question the night before, and assured Mrs. Byron her mother longed very much to see a family they had heard so much of from her brother; that she would have accompanied her in this visit, but her health being very infirm, she never went abroad morning and evening both, and saved herself to chaperon the young Ladies;

Ladies ; but to-morrow Lady Maldown would wait on her,—and begged the honour of conducting the party to dinner at her house.

It was impossible not to comply with every request of Lady Sophia's ; her manner was softness itself ; and Mrs. Byron felt herself involuntarily drawn in, to mingle with the world, when she least intended it ; however, she determined in her own mind to set off the day after the visit, in spite of every means which might be devised to detain her. She longed very much for a letter from Julia, who she knew would never think of addressing her at Bath.

Lord Clairmont then entered into conversation with Gertrude, while Lord Maldown was busied giving his opinion on the choice of some patterns for working a pocket book, which lay in Armenia's lap ; when they were interrupted by George Gordon and Annette. George insisted *she should* go to the ball ; she was sure her mother would be angry, if the question was asked ; and there was a struggle, almost amounting to a wrestle, between them ; however he contrived to call out, through her fingers, which were expanded across his mouth, “ She shall go to the ball.”

Mrs. Byron, who thought she was much fitter for the nursery, looked astonished. The little girl dropped her hands, and retired to the window ; but her mother was assailed from all quarters.

Lady Sophia said it was not at all unusual to see young Ladies of Annette's age, at the rooms.

George declaring he would dance with her himself ; and the other gentlemen praying she might be permitted to go, Mrs. Byron was vanquished, but declared to her nephew, her will was set at nought ; she must make the best of her way home, to be considered in any degree of authority.

Lady Sophia then arose, to depart, desiring the young Ladies to be with her in time.

Lord Clairmont engaged Miss Gordon,—and Lord Maldown, Armenia, for the evening. And the important business of the toilette was soon after commenced.

George Gordon told his aunt he had engaged his friend, Colonel Hamilton, to dine, and pass the evening with her at piquet. She had seen this veteran in many parties, and felt the attentions of her nephew very gratefully.

When the ladies assembled at dinner, nothing could be better chosen than their attire; and Gertrude, who presided over the regulation of this business, gave proof of her judgment, according to custom.

The old Colonel made many compliments to our heroines, and found out likenesses for them, all of their father's family, to whom he had been very well known.

It was soon time to set out for Lady Maldown's. The Captain recommended his aunt to the Colonel, and added, he hoped to meet him there at supper; then giving his hand to his partner, with a profound bow left the two elder ladies to follow.

Arrived at Lady Maldown's, they met a most handsome reception. She felt her sanguine expectations agreeably realized; and after the usual ceremonies, they all proceeded to the rooms.

The timid Armenia, keeping fast hold of her sister's arm, the offers of Lord Maldown, to conduct her, were of no effect. He felt an inward delight at sentiments so according with his own, and thought he could venture to say more to her than to any woman on earth. He had not forgotten the lovely Julia; but there was a reserve about

about her, so frozen, that kept him in awe. Armenia was lovely, timid, and obliging; and her soft eye sought the favour of her bearers, as she spoke.

The minuets had begun when they entered the rooms; but very soon after Lady Sophia was taken out, and displayed her little form to great advantage. Gertrude followed her, and the natural grace of her person, added to a peculiar elegance in her method of dancing, caused a general murmur of applause, accompanied by, Who is she?

The compliment was next paid to Armenia, but neither the persuasion of Lady Maldown, or reproof of Gertrude, could prevail over her terror; though she very readily joined in country dances, and acquitted herself there with the vivacity of a Scotch girl. She got down twenty couple with little difficulty; and so intent was she to the dance, she lost half the fine things Lord Maldown said to her. Annette performed a merveille, and more than half the women in the rooms envied her.

George Gordon was truly handsome; and as at that moment, no woman at Bath interested him, so all his devoirs were given to his little partner, to their no small mortification.

The party enjoyed the amusement in its full force, and were very sorry when the master of ceremonies gave his mandate for leaving off. Lord Maldown felt so partial a sentiment that he determined upon persuading his mother, in the course of the summer, to visit this family at Orwell Manor.

They were pressed to sup with Lady Maldown; but declined that honour, on account of Mrs. Byron. Her Ladyship then took her leave, reminding them of their next day's engagement.

They found the good couple very busy at piquet; but they made such a noise, and had so much to say, that Mrs. Byron, who had a repique in her hand, was obliged to throw down her cards, to let them go on. Supper however, soon interrupted their harangue, and the Colonel and Captain did honour to the lampreys and wild duck, leaving chocolate cream and blamange to the ladies, who had taken so much in at their eyes, that eating was a sort of supernumerary business.

At an early hour next day, Lady Maldown made her visit, accompanied by Lady Sophia; and so well pleased was she with her new acquaintance, that she proposed to Mrs. Byron to take an airing on the downs. George ordered the coach immediately, and, being joined by Lord Maldown and Lord Clairmont, made a strong party for the morning; and only returned time enough for making some alterations in their dress.

Mrs. Byron took an opportunity of declaring to her nephew and daughters, her resolutions of leaving Bath next day; and this in a manner so determined, that no opposition was made to it.

They proceeded to the crescent, and found no other company but those already mentioned. Their dinner was in a superb style, and after coffee Mr. Beauchamp coming in, who was a professed admirer of Lady Sophia's, they sent for music, and made out a cotillion, which lasted till supper; in the course of which, their departure, on the next day, was talked of.

Lady Maldown told Mrs. Byron, she could not, with any patience, think of losing her acquaintance so soon. "Will you allow me to call on you, as the summer approaches?" continued that Lady: "I know your house very well: Lord Orwell is my cousin german; and I am sure you have room enough.

enough. I must visit an aunt of my Lord's, about fifteen miles beyond you; and I positively shall take you in my road."

It was impossible to refuse, an offer so politely, and yet so pressingly given. Mrs. Byron felt the intention of this visit, and therefore failed not in acknowledgments.

When the hour of separation drew near, repeated assurances of a wish for the speedy re-union of the same party, were given, and they parted.

My lord, on handing Armenia to the coach, intimated his intention of seeing them safe over the passage next day; to which she made no reply; but by a blush which was not observed by the light of a flambeau.

C H A P. XII.

AT ten next morning our travellers took leave of Bath, in the same order they came; not indeed in tumultuous spirits.

Mrs. Byron was happy, and Gertrude has seen pursers arrivals at the India House announced in the last papers; so those two had pleasures in peto. Armenia thought living on ideas might do, till her accustomed occupations again became her pleasures. Her happy temper seldom knew regret; and under the influence of no headstrong passion, her smooth, unruffled life glided away.

These

These different sentiments occupied their bosoms, when Lord Maldown rode up to the carriage, bringing compliments and good wishes in abundance. He offered his services, in helping to conduct them across the passage. He was joined by Captain Gordon; and the distance was shortened by many observations and anecdotes concerning the inhabitants of the fine seats they passed in their way.

The wind arose by the time they got to the passage; and it was proposed by his Lordship, that they should stay where they were.

Mrs. Byron, though dreadfully afraid of the water, did not like to lose a night on the road; therefore, after inquiring of the host, if there was any danger, and being answered, Certainly none, they embarked, (the carriage, servants, and horses being on their way) in the small boat. The tide ran with force. Two of the men drunk and tenacious, acted every thing contrary.

The ladies were terrified; the gentlemen vociferous; a confusion took place, that must have upset the boat, if George Gordon had not cut the rope which held the sail. The event was, she fell to leeward for want of it: But there was no time for alternatives: The waves dashed in, over the quarter, and they were half full of water.

Mrs. Byron's tears and prayers were breathed for her poor children. Gertrude held her mother's hand and strove to comfort her. Annette had set down in the bottom of the boat, half drowned; and Lord Maldown was covering Armenia with his coat, and supporting her weeping face, which insensibly hid itself through fright upon his bosom; when all at once they struck upon a rock.

The sensations of each at this moment, are not to

to be described : One shriek was given, and then a dreadful silence : No voice of comfort was heard. George, who had been busy every way, sat down, and the drunken authors of the mischief remained in mute expectation of their fate.

A sloop, which lay at anchor, at some distance, sent out her boat, but without hope of saving any of them ; scarce daring to approach the rocks at such a crisis ; when fortunately Mr. Gordon, by an effort, and some veering of the wind, pushed the boat from the rock. The man that was sober seized the moment to hoist the sail, keeping the rope in his hand, till such time as the other boat had got near enough to take them in, which they accomplished, and all quitted the passage boat, which soon after sunk full of water.

Their deliverers made for the sloop, declaring they dared not venture till the turn of the tide, to put to shore. This, at any other moment, so cold and wet, would have been thought a hardship. But (as misery and happiness are sometimes felt by comparison) was cheerfully assented to by our dripping company ; who thought the smokey cabin a pavilion of pleasure, and the dirty watch coats, garments of brocade, which were put about them ; while their riding dresses were hung in the shrouds to dry..

Lord Maldown took a blanket from the hammock, to put under their feet, while their shoes were placed by the fire ; and George, who had been absent a few minutes, entered with some warm juniper, (a cordial the master kept for a regale,) and insisted upon every one swallowing a mouthful of it.

This was the first moment of risible inclination which had for some time affected our company ; and they took the smoking beverage with a smile, and

and obeyed the command. Small as the quantity was which passed their lips, it answered the desired effect : No one caught cold, or suffered after.

The humane sailor put them on shore, in about an hour, equipped as you see them, bundling up their half-dry'd habits under his arm.

The gentlemen gave him five guineas each, and Mrs. Byron insisted on being allowed to give a guinea a-piece to the friendly boatmen ; to which the young ladies all added something more.

Each took two of his fatigued companions, and they were slowly advancing up the hill, when they saw a gentleman running down in breathless speed. Guess, reader, if you can, his name, his business:

" Was it a spirit of health, or goblin damn'd,
" It came in such a questionable shape,
" That they would speak to it."

But only one could speak, and called it St. Clair. Mrs. Byron's voice was only heard, all else was dumb : and when the stranger folded Gertrude in his arms, astonishment still barred all utterance.

Mr. St. Clair had arrived, with other officers, employed with government dispatches concerning a peace. He had set off for the Manor, supposing his letters had announced his intentions of visiting them, and crossed the passage about half an hour before our party had arrived. Stopping to take some refreshment on the other side, he had viewed the imminent peril of the boat ; and compassion kept him waiting by the shore, (though ignorant how much the event concerned him,) till he saw them leave the sloop, when he returned to the house, in order to proceed. A servant, who was just coming out of the inn, asked very civilly, if the boat had yet reached shore ? Curiosity tempted

tempted St. Clair to inquire if he belonged to the distressed party. And he was answered in the affirmative ; and that his master, Captain Gordon, was in the boat, who was returning from Bath, with his aunt, Mrs. Byron, and her daughters, who were going to Orwell Manor. St. Clair staid for no more ; but bounding from the hill, clasped his astonished mistress to his bosom.

It is not easy to imagine the strange effect this rencontre, so unexpected, had upon our friends. George Gordon had never heard of St. Clair, and Lord Maldown took him for a madman, and endeavoured to pull him from the Lady.

St. Clair, owning no authority but Mrs. Byron's, took her arm, and placed it through his own, looking with scornful triumph at his rival. Gertrude at once recollected herself, turned, and bowing round, " Lord Maldown and my cousin, I present you Mr. St. Clair, one of my first and worthy friends."

This gave an explanation satisfactory, and they mounted the hill, my Lord being eased from half of his burthen.

When they reached the house, the Ladies were under the necessity of retiring to alter their apparel. During which, the gentlemen fell upon the topic of the late war in Asia. Mr. St. Clair displayed so much knowledge, humanity, and true courage, in recounting those occurrences which came within his department, that our gentlemen soon became delighted with his company ; and as it was impossible they could proceed further on their journey that night, Lord Maldown promised himself *one* more delightful evening.

The unaffected politeness, sound sense, and agreeable fallies, which never failed to attend the conversation of his new acquaintances, made him

regret going back to fashionable nonsense and impertinence : Not that these ever prevailed in his own family ; but to live in the world, he must unavoidably meet these forward companions almost at every house he visited.

At the entrance of the ladies, conversation took another turn ; in the course of which we became informed, that St. Clair had, on the certainty of peace, given in his resignation, proposing to accept that appointment, mentioned by Mr. Theodore Mandville, in the civil line : that having obtained a year's leave, to arrange his affairs, he had gained permission to put in a deputy, and proposed devoting this interval to his friends, many of whom he had not seen from his infancy.

A late dinner was now put on the table ; joy and pleasure reigned ; every care was forgot ; even the late drowning scene ;—and Lord Maldown quoted his favourite lines of

“ Wisely enjoy the present bliss.
“ Nor in what may be, lose what is.”

Adverting perhaps to his quitting them to-morrow.

They did not seek repose till a late hour, when various recollections took place of sleep. St. Clair thought how very near he had been losing his mistress for ever, after all his toils and danger.

Lord Maldown still felt the lovely cheek of Armenia in his bosom, and thought he could have perished thus, without a sigh ; and Gertrude thought :—Oh, it was such a combination of ideas, that my pen, nor yours, reader, nor any other pen could *pen* ; in short, they were her own, and we must learn to think like her to know them.

They met at an early hour next day, in order to reach the Manor in good time. Some faces there

there were not quite so animated: When the groom came to tell his Lordship the boat was ready, Armenia's rose, took a deeper hue, and she turned to the window. The sloop was still in view: Recollection brought a tear to her eye, which dropped without her knowledge, on the offered hand that sought one parting touch. 'Twas a pearl of such value, that, like the Egyptian queen, my Lord carried it to his lips, and swallowed it. Then pressed the trembling hand, and hurried off. Perhaps not daring to trust another look.

C H A P. XIII.

THEY again began their journey, and about seven in the evening, arrived at the Manor; and entered the oak parlour, where a wood fire crackled joyfully around, and coffee, rich cream, and home-made cakes presented them a repast most unexceptionable.

Large packets of letters ornamented the looking-glafs, which, as soon as politeness admitted, Mrs. Byron took occasion to peruse. She sought the hand writing of Julia from the rest, and hastily broke the seal, gave up her whole ideas at that moment to maternal feelings; though it contained little more than excuses for her abrupt departure, and assurances of the happiness she enjoyed in the unremitting attention of her friends. A

great

great deal was not to be expected from a letter dated the day after her arrival in London; but she concluded by promising to transmit her every action, minutely as they occurred, and begging a reciprocal return from her mother.

These accounts being communicated to the company, an involuntary sigh was heard near about Mr. Gordon. There is no doubt but this gentleman saw his beautiful relation with a most tender inclination; but he never could procure from her a return more warm than what she would have shewn a brother.

He was struck with the uncommon animation of Miss Mandville, and paid to her that tribute of commendation every fine woman expects; he thought he saw it gratefully received, and before they parted, began a debate in his mind, whether fifty thousand pounds, with such a soul and body, might not compensate for giving up his chaste Dian, when winged with disdain.

He was not such a coxcomb as to assure himself of success; but lovers look to probabilities, and sometimes beyond them; determined, however, not to think any more of his cousin, he had forgot to prohibit a sigh, which on the present occasion escaped him. Gertrude's eye met his; the sigh was lengthened into a hem; and ended in, "I am grieved that I must leave you to-morrow. My time is expired, and my party will return me, deserted."

"And so you are, if I may be allowed to play on the word, my good cuz," rejoined the Lady; "else why that sigh."

"You were ever unmerciful to me, madam; remember you fired the first shot. Shall I draw up my whole train of artillery against you; you have furnished me with ammunition."

"No,

"No, no, no,—a truce,—a peace,—any thing,—let me get out of this skirmish," she cried, "and I will be very good in future."

Early the next morning Mr. Gordon set off, saying *farewell* to none but Agnes; and truly 'twas a kind one, if one might judge by a noise something resembling the smack of a whip; to which she felt inclined to return a *smack* in the face. But ten thousand pardons subdued the irritated brunette,—and partiality to his cloth reconciled her to his assurance, as she was sure of his departure: For by this time he was on a full gallop down the avenue.

At breakfast Agnes declared the secret which was given in her charge; and now Mr. St. Clair found himself in quiet possession of this great castle, and all its lovely inhabitants committed to his care. He could not forbear observing to them the terror he felt, at the idea of their having passed so many months in such a dangerous solitude. At which Mrs. Byron smiled, and related the adventure that brought them acquainted with Sir Theodore; concluding that she had met more happiness, in this seemingly terrible abode, than she could have found, had she diligently searched for it in the world; that it now was become dear to her; and she believed, if her fortune changed, she should then even become Lord Orwell's tenant. He acknowledged the situation pleasant, but the portentous appearance of falling walls, tottering fragments, and hollow sounds, from opening chasms, gave no very charming idea to the stranger.

A walk was proposed, in order to shew off the prospects, and chase away the gloomy view of the Manor.

St. Clair, who, till that moment had had no opportunity

portunity to breathe his vows to his beloved, seized the occasion, and slackening his pace by degrees, as Gertrude held by his arm, he suffered the rest of the party to go on at some distance. He then declared to her his whole business in England was to throw himself and fortunes at her feet, and concluded, by begging permission to apply to her mother, as he was now in a situation of life to authorize his proposals; that if she was not altered, change of climate, with a man she had so long honoured by a preference, would, he trusted be no barrier between them.

Gertrude sighed, and St. Clair waited her answer with eager expectation.

" You shall never accuse me of affectation or disingenuousness," rejoined she. " I hope, if ever I change my condition, to realize those vows given you before your departure: But can I think of quitting, perhaps for ever, a mother and sisters so dearly loved: my mother's health very precarious,—my sisters unprovided for; were they deprived of her, how would my selfish heart reproach my absence. Let me beseech you not to renew this conversation, at least for some month's: Say what you please to my mother, but leave the decision to a later day."

She then hastened to join her mother and sisters; and St. Clair felt such a damp to his fond wishes as could not be cleared away. His only hope was from prevailing on Mrs. Byron to be his advocate; and he even dreaded her not exerting her powers in his favour, in a point that must send her darling child to so tremendous a distance, though happiness, in the general sense of the word, should await to bid her welcome.

C H A P. XIV.

AT this period it will not be amiss to join our friends, in town. The hollow winds and keen showers beat hard on the old mansion: and I am afraid my reader has long since been tired of its dulness. In the noble house of Sir Theodore, we shall find joy and pleasure reign; eastern magnificence, blended with English hospitality; all was grandeur, yet nothing pompous; a numerous retinue, yet not one slave. Can we doubt of the happiness of our young friend. The tide of delight, which, at first coming out, oppressed her, was become now sailing in a mill pond; and she could bear being tossed about from Hyde-Park to dinner, from dinner to the play, from the play to a route, from a route to a supper, and so on, with as steady a head as if she had been accustomed to it. She had a natural sort of composure about her, which, after the first view of these amusements, did not deprive her of the enjoyment of them, but prevented that dizziness too often prejudicial to young Ladies so suddenly thrown into the world, which is vulgarly called, "The head being turned with vanity."

The adulation she met, wherever she went; the loud whispers that reached her,—the emulation to please her,—and the delight one smile from her seemed to create, were insidious enemies against her reason; but she parried them all with the most unaffected reserve; which only added to the number

ber of her admirers, though it kept them at an awful distance.

Amongst the foremost of her humble servants, was Lord John Raymond, who met her, soon after her arrival, at a route. He contrived to get himself into Lady Middleton's parties, who being a very good-natured woman, her house was easy of access to most people of unsullied reputation, classed in the line of distinction.

Through her means he had layed his plan of visiting at Sir Theodore's and what his plan was afterwards, he certainly did not know,—confining it solely to the present pleasure of seeing and conversing with Miss Julia Gordon.

As the Mandville family were always sure of a card to Lady Middleton's parties, they shortly after, became acquainted, at her house, with Lady Maldown, and Lady Sophia Warton, who were her great intimates. She no sooner heard who the beautiful young Lady was, on whom every eye was fixed from her entering the room; but she desired Lady Middleton to introduce her. The latter, taking Julia's hand, complied immediately, and Lady Maldown complimented her on her alliance to that amiable family she had so recently conceived a most sincere friendship for.

Lady Middleton then presented Sir Theodore and Alicia; and an intimacy commenced at that period, which has lasted ever since.

An invitation was given to a dining party at Lady Maldown's for Thursday, which was accepted by our friends.

Her Ladyship apologized to Sir Theodore, for having no gentlemen to preside, (as her son was gone down to Yorkshire for a few weeks) but assured him she should endeavour to find a substitute for him.

When

When that day arrived, and the company met at Lady Maldown's : They found, among others, Lord Orwell, and his second son, Mr. Charles Wentworth.

Julia felt a repugnance at this unexpected rencontre ; and could not subdue a sentiment of pride and mortification. His Lordship could not be long in her company without feeling a desire of speaking to her, and by way of leading to a conversation, he hoped she had left her friends well at Orwell Manor. She blushed and bowed, adding something in a very low voice. But Mr. Charles, availing himself of the opening his father had made, exclaimed, " Is it possible, I have the honour of speaking to one of the fair inhabitants of that once hideous cloister. I remember some years since, passing one night in it, when you, my Lord, was making a tour through Wales ; and I think the cave of despair had not half its horrors."

" You are *apt* to be premature in your judgments, Mr. Wentworth," said Lord Orwell, gravely.

" The light we perceive all objects in, depends on the state of one's own mind, I believe, Sir," answered Julia: " You perhaps was splenetic when at Orwell Manor: This being a malady we are wholly unacquainted with, we view it through the multiplier of gratitude, and find it delightful."

His lordship bowed very low; Mr. Wentworth hummed a tune, and turned to the window; and a glow of approbation flushed to the cheeks of Sir Theodore and Alicia. Our young gentleman, however, not easily dismayed, sprung forward as the dinner was announced, to present his hand to Julia; which she could not decline without appearing particular; and he had the happiness, as the company sat chequered, to be placed between her and

and Miss Mandville, he pressed rather than offered, his attentions: and Julia was more grave than usual, as her voisine became more officious. He, who, at first, thought her a simple country beauty, was astonished to find the elegance of the world, with the simplicity of modest truth, attendant on all her words and actions.

It was time to change his mode of attack: He now put on a thoughtful air, affected absence, waked from his reverie, then looked at her, and if observed, dropped his eye and sighed.

Sick of such a coxcomb, as she stamped him in her mind, she rejoiced, when the Ladies retired to the drawing-room; when, to her no small disgust, he entered, boasting of his escape from wine, and begging to be admitted of their party.

His relationship to Lady Maldown gave her a partial idea of him, and she construed that into vivacity which sometimes bordered on impertinence.

He lounged upon the sofa, hummed a tune, repeated scraps of poetry, picked his teeth, and went through all the *manual exercise* of a man of the ton, —frequently glancing at Julia, to see how it affected her.

This minion had been left forty thousand pounds by his grandmother, who had brought him up, which, under the idea of his father being an Earl, he thought entitled him to command any Lady to fall in love with him.

He had never been suffered to quit his grandmother while she lived; a private tutor having been provided for him; so that emerging at once from her apron, into a world he was before only slightly acquainted with, it was no wonder, in dipping at once into a sea of pleasure, the froth and scum should adhere pretty closely about him.

Lord Orwell had not been inattentive to the defects

seals of his son; but at an age too far advanced for correction, and not enough matured for advice, he found reprehension a task of useless labour, and trusted to time and chance for his amendment.

Lord Orwell himself was all that was requisite as a good man, or agreeable companion; and Sir Theodore sought his further acquaintance; so that an invitation was given by him to the whole party for Monday following, and accepted.

During the remainder of this evening, Mr. Charles Wentworth became the pest of Julia, and the badinage of her young associates, on her new conquest, added to her embarrassment.

Lady Middleton was more gay this winter than usual: She disposed herself to whatever her daughter suggested: For as Miss Mortimer could not bear the eye of the world so soon after her misfortune, she had retired to her Ladyship's country seat for some months; and Miss Farrington was gone to attend a new married relation, in the forms and ceremonies of occasional visits, otherwise called, fitting up with a bride.

The charming Miss Middleton availed herself of her present power to indulge her taste for amusements, and it was projected by her, to persuade her mother to give a masked ball; but the idea was only in embryo, and wanted occasion for it to be put in execution.

Never did Julia find such a relief as when they were told the carriage was ready; she put her hand into Sir Theodore's, unsought, and placing herself, inattentive to all method, she drew up the window, to avoid hearing that voice which had fairly disgusted her.

Alicia could contain no longer, but bursting into a laugh, wished her joy as Mrs. Wentworth.

"My consent is to be asked," cried Sir Theodore,

dore, "in such a case; and notwithstanding the abundant merit of the gentleman, I think I shall say, no."

"Rather immure me," said Julia; "make me, gramere, scullion, or cinderella, but never Mrs. Wentworth."

When alone, she could not help revolving in her mind the variety of new characters that had lately come to her knowledge, and wondered at her own stupidity in finding out so few amongst them that had a right to be deemed an acquisition.

"How strange is it," said she, "that the advantage of birth and riches should varnish over the vices that we abhor in those of low condition; surely I am illiberal to form a judgment in this case; let me not abide by it; my youth shews me objects in an improper light. I hope, when I awake, a more philanthropic sentiment will take the lead." Her eyelid dropped, and peace and innocence laid her pillow easy.

We have neglected too long taking a proper interest in the concerns of our much admired Miss Mandville, who shone in splendour, both by natural and acquired endowments. The prospect of her wealth was a sufficient inducement for a crowd of sordid admirers; yet for herself alone she was sought by many; and none more deeply enamoured than Lord Beauchamp. He was rich, handsome, and wise; declared himself her lover; layed his fortune at her feet; and lived but in the sunshine of her eyes.

It is impossible she could have found one reasonable objection to him; yet she felt a repugnance to encourage him, or any, in particular. Whenever the vivacity of her temper kept her unsettled, or had she seen one whose influence she owned, was undiscovered. But no positive assurance could

be

be procured from her, further, than she should not marry these seven years.

Sir Theodore had been applied to by the seniors, with offers of settlements on his own conditions, but he determined parental authority should never be used, unless he discerned an attachment unworthy of his daughter; which he had very little cause to dread.

Monday arrived, and the party assembled, all but Lady Middleton, whose excuse came, praying to render her visit in the evening; and asking permission to be escorted by Lord John Raymond. Such a request could not be denied, and a suitable message was returned.

Julia was doomed again to stand the artillery of Mr. Charles Wentworth; though a good deal impeded by Lord Orwell who seemed determined to place himself as a barrier between them. He had seen the chagrin occasioned the preceding meeting, by his son's affiduities, and would have spared Julia from his impertinence.

After dinner this young gentleman endeavoured to make his escape to the drawing room, but Lord Orwell called to him; and asking Sir Theodore's permission, ordered a pint glass of warm milk and water; which he set before him, desiring him, as he was not sufficiently robust, to partake more generous wine, to soften his impatience to break up the party, by imbibing the diluting potion before him.

A blush rose upon Wentworth's cheek; but it was that of resentment; and he sat down with the pure and pious resolution of being revenged of his father.

At the time they joined the Ladies, Mr. Wentworth was doomed to feel still greater mortifications. Lord J—— was at the side of his idol, pouring

pouring forth a torrent of fine things; to all which she gave a smile of approbation; what Mr. Wentworth had never yet been favoured with. He tried one chair, then another, flung himself into the fateuil, and actually imagined he was very ill used. When the parties were placed for cards, he found his lot cast at a distant table, and the happy Lord John cut as Julia's partner for whist. He lost deal, revoked, called at eight with one honour in his hand, and at length cut out.

Relieved from his dreadful chain, that had fastened him to the table, he skipped to the back of Julia's chair, and patting her shoulder familiarly, in order to shew his rival the good terms they were upon, demanded what luck.

"Very bad at *present*, I am sure," answered she, with a look that would have frozen any other.

Lord John looked at him full, then cut the cards to the dealer. Mortified every way, he retired to a corner, where, bursting with envy, he took out his pencil and scrawled a likeness of his father, on his knees, to a young woman with nothing but a plaid thrown round her, my Lord offering her his star, with one hand, and a long purse with the other; which she seems to accept, bending forward, while her head is turned round to a young man (done for Lord John) with a label streaming from her mouth, "Thus weel do you gued ladie."

Caricaturing was this hero's forte; he took the features strikingly like; and he vented his spleen at once on his father and the lady, by dropping the paper beside her, and then vanishing.

Julia seeing him advance, averted her eye; but as he left the room, espied the paper beside her; thinking it might have fallen from her pocket, she picked it up and unfolding it, beheld the figures. Lord Orwell had just then been speaking to Miss

Middleton,

Middleton, who played also at that table, threw his eye upon the scrawl, and then on Julia who was endeavouring to suppress her emotion. He soon conceived a part of the design, and begged her to give him the paper. She knew not how to act, but rising hastily, meant to leave the room. He followed her, and pressed so eagerly for the paper, that she delivered it and retired.

This occasioned some bustle. Miss Middleton went to seek her friend; Lord John looked astonished; and the card table was broke up.

His Lordship could not have failed observing, in the course of the evening, a particular sort of conduct on the part of Mr. Charles Wentworth; but as the result of it had produced nothing more than disdain in Julia. His feelings were rather gratified; it is certain he could boast no singular attention given to his pointed compliments or expressive glances; yet he was treated with distinction, compared to that unhappy and disappointed lover.

The charmer, not yet returned, and Lord John being disengaged, he flung himself on a vacant sofa, fell into a reverie. Every one was busied in their own parties, so that he rested undisturbed. His cogitations seemed to be as follows: That he was a poor Lord, younger son of a Duke; had broke his fortune by a passion for horse racing; was now desperately in love with a fine girl, who was still poorer than himself: That marriage would never do in this case; and any other terms could not be offered; that he was no villain; and, last of all, he had better forget her.

She entered at that moment; he started up, went hastily toward her, and by his eager inquiries, if she had been sick or in pain, shewed how firmly his resolution had been established the minute before.

Lord

Lord Orwell had retired when Julia left the room, under the most unpleasant sensations; he could not determine what course to take immediately, but at any rate was resolved satisfaction should be amply made for the unmerited affront his son had given her; as to himself, he had small hopes of receiving any excuses; he knew the untoward disposition he had to deal with, and concluded, that nothing but a separation from him could ensure any sort of amity, and even then dreaded the power of such a temper, when left entirely to its own management.

The persuading him to consent to travel, had been aimed at by Lord Orwell several times; but the thought of having a companion, that might in the least restrain him, was always his objection. To suffer Wentworth to take any step without an adviser, would have been worse than keeping him under his own roof; and his Lordship now regretted, that any motive should have engaged him to give up the boy, when an infant, to the infatuated indulgence of a doating grand-mother.

As soon as he got home, he went to his closet, and ordering that no one might disturb him, wrote a letter, to be delivered to Mr. Wentworth at his hour of rising. The contents purported, a desire for an explanation of the last night's conduct; as a gentleman and as a father, wishing also to know his views as to Miss Julia Gordon, and motives for the unmerited insult he had offered her; concluding very laconically, that if he refused making the most humble reparation to the lady, he must depart from his present abode, under not only his displeasure, but the odium of having the matter made public.

This chocolate was served the young gentleman at his toilette, which, though altogether not to his taste,

taste, he was obliged to swallow. Dismissing his valet, he set about considering what could possibly plague his father most; and yet serve his own purpose. After much deliberation, he resolved to propose to his Lordship, offering himself as a husband to Miss Julia. He loved her, it was true, but he was certain his father wished not that any concession should point that way. He had now, he thought, devised a mode of seeming compliance with his Lordship's wishes, and at the same time tormenting him even more than by the first insult.

He then couched an answer more civilly than usual; pleaded love and jealousy as a cause for his misconduct, and offered the reparation before-mentioned, praying to attend his Lordship to the Lady as soon as possible.

This billet being delivered to Lord Orwell, he tried the matter every way, and was certain, on comparing circumstances, that Julia would reject his son; and even if she should be tempted, from interested motives, to accept him, she was more capable to reform him than most women. Her family was unexceptionable, and there was no money wanting in his family. He fixed his resolves, and sent to tell Mr. Wentworth the carriage would be ready at three o'clock, to carry them to Sir Theodore Mandville's.

Astonished at this message, so contrary to his expectations, he mused a little, whistled a tune, rung for his servant, and prepared to go a *courting*. During the second operation of curling and powdering, he was forming a speech to begin the attack, and was actually half way through it, when his Lordship sent to say he was ready. However premature this summons might be, he very soon adjusted the coat, waistcoat, and laced cravat, and

waited on his father with a very awkward salute; and after placing themselves in the chariot, my Lord, with an aspect of stern discontent, addressed Mr. Wentworth as follows: "Have you well considered what you are going about Sir?"

"Certainly I have," replied the youth, and "praise my own ingenuity, that has brought about the very thing you seemed so much in dread of yesterday, when your Lordship put *yourself* in my place."

"Your inuendos are too puerile to call forth any sentiment but contempt; so I shall drop the subject, Mr. Wentworth."

The young gentleman again renewed the plan of a speech to be made on entering; and Lord Orwell remained silent also till the carriage stopped.

Some how or other, on going up the steps, Mr. Charles made an unlucky stumble; the speech flew out of his head; and by the time he reached the dressing-room, he wished himself at home, to con over another. It came into his mind, that Julia might refuse him; a thought which had not struck him before; and though the matter itself would not have broke his heart, yet mortified pride might choke him, and produce as bad an effect; so that when the door opened, he had a sort of a cold distillation all over him, something like a stone wall in a rainy day; and he presented himself with a demeanour not likely to ensure success.

Julia and Alicia were at their embroidery when his Lordship walked in, and the former was overwhelmed by the appearance of the second person. His Lordship approached, and taking her hand, begged her to fear no further insult. Mr. Wentworth now came to offer every apology she might think

think necessary, for his late misconduct. He turned to his son, who was so confused, that he was perfectly gasping, and appeared to be attacked by an osification; at last, making an effort, he flung himself at Julia's feet, and mumbled over something about passion, love, and jealousy, concluding with marriage; which so alarmed the lovely Julia, that she pushed her chair back, in order to rise; but he clung to her apron, vowing never to loose his hold till she pronounced his pardon.

"Most willingly, Sir, I pardon every thing," said she, looking at Lord Orwell for protection.

"Then you shall be my wife," said he, exultingly.

"Wife!" said Julia; "my dear Alicia, where is Sir Theodore?"

"Fear nothing, my dear madam," cried Lord Orwell; then turning to his son, "you had better retire, Sir; your vehemence is an antidote to all tenderness."

"Yes, pray retire," rejoined the terrified Julia, "and don't ——" Here she burst into tears, and forced her way out of the room, followed by Alicia.

Mr. Wentworth was still on his knees; and Lord Orwell had not changed his position; so completely were all their purposes defeated.

"You have now compleated the business, I think," said his Lordship. Charles stamped, swore, and thumping his forehead, ran out of the house; and his father returned home in a humour better felt than described.

C H A P. XII.

AS Mr. Wentworth was not seen for some days in Brook-street, they were in doubt as to the effect of his disappointment, when a letter arrived, dated Dover, informing Lord Orwell he was gone to pass a few months on the Continent.

Julia had now got the better of her alarm, and her spirits were returned, (indeed her fears had originally proceeded from the dread of a second affront;) she now saw the affair only in a ludicrous light; and Miss Mandville and her entertained themselves at the effect the word *wife* had upon her.

They had never made Sir Theodore acquainted with the matter, for fear of unpleasant consequences; and they besought Lord Orwell to be silent, as communicating the story could be of no use to any body, and there was a delicacy on all sides necessary for its being suppressed. This very worthy man saw also the propriety of their wishes, and became doubly attentive to Julia, in order to do away his son's offence.

About this time letters arrived from young Theodore, promising himself a happy meeting with his friends in England, as he had taken his passage on board the Pitt, which was to sail soon after the date of the letter.

Great were the rejoicings in Albemarle-street; Feasting, dancing, and every emblem of gladness took their turn; what was before splendid became superb; and Alicia's fancy had occupation, without

out end, to strike out new pleasures; nobody participated the delight of her friend more sincerely than Lady Middleton; and now was the moment for her fair daughter to bring about her masquerade scheme; which she had almost given up, from an intimation that Miss Mortimer would soon be in town. She immediately proposed to her mother, in a compliment to Sir Theodore, giving invitations to as many of their acquaintance as could conveniently arrange themselves in the supper room, for a masked ball.

Lady Middleton smiled at her vivacity; but declared the fatigue of conducting such a business was too much for her, and added, "What comments would your aunt Mortimer make on such a proceeding?"

"Dear madam," replied her daughter, my aunt "knows our friendship for the Mandville family, and would, if she were in town, take the character of Ariel herself, I dare answer; and as for operation and plan, give me but your permission, and you shall have no trouble further than opening the strings of your purse, to the admission of my finger and thumb."

"Well, you always do as you please with me, spoiled pet," said Lady Middleton. "Set about writing the invitations, and I shall order Wright and the Butler to take your commands."

Fanny kissed her hand, and set off to her room, to write cards, and hold a council with the aforesaid lady and gentleman.

The first card was dispatched to Albemarle-Street, where it was received with all the delight such an invitation naturally creates in the young and gay; and gratefully did Sir Theodore acknowledge the politeness of his friend. The much longed for return of his son was ever uppermost in his

his thoughts ; and a compliment, such as Lady Middleton was now making, in token of joy for that expected event, could not fail of giving him the most lively pleasure.

The day was not far distant, and prior engagements, with now and then a letter to the Manor, left Julia no great leisure to study her dress. Alicia had fixed on that of an Indian Princess ; but Julia objected to taking a character, not having courage to support it. After much deliberation Miss Mandville declared she should go as night personified, which being silent, needed no exertion, (for she would not hear of a domino.) Her attire was then discussed : The under habit was to be of a silver grey ; the mantle falling from the shoulders, of black gauze and crape, with silver stars, spangled all over it, a veil of the same, through which shone, in the front of the head, a brilliant crescent.

Julia objected to all this with much vehemence ; but it was in vain ; for Sir Theodore joined in approving the fancy, so it was settled nemini contradicenti.

How the interval passed, after the abovementioned decision, they never told me ; but the morning of the happy day, I learned, they were all very busy, even down to my old friend Stephen, who of late has not made his appearance. While in London his occupations are not so general, confining himself more to the apartments of his master, where, with another valet, who dresses hair, &c. &c. he claims the precedence : He keeps the keys of the linen and wardrobe of Sir Theodore ; goes of all his private messages,—such as to the bankers and others ; stays to stir the fire and snuff the candles, if his master writes or reads, and claims the title of his necessary man. Howbeit Stephen

Stephen was called forth by his own desire, this evening. He not only mingled in the general joy, but internally breathed an honest humble prayer, for prosperous gales.

It was determined, to avoid the mob, that the Mandville party should go in chairs to Lady Middleton's, and each chair had two footmen before, (Mr. Stephen being in front of his master's.) Marshalled in this array, at ten in the evening they joined the brilliant scene. As it was the first exhibition of the kind, Julia had ever seen, she stuck close to Sir Theodore; and sober-footed night tripped into the apartments with the speed of a shooting star.

Kings, Beggars, Turks, Necromancers, Sailors, surrounded them at once. An Apollo was instantly at the feet of Miss Mandville, and sung, "Lovely nymph, affwage," most engagingly. A tight jockey, equipped in his satin jacket, cap, &c. not weighing more than eight stone, posted himself close behind Julia; and a Sultan, in passing, threw his handkerchief at her. Sir Theodore, in the part of Merlin, kept off as much as possible with his wand, the party-coloured crew; but finding his charge oppressed, he made his way to a sofa, and there placed her, to take breath. A frightful Caliban now made toward them, and by his awkward gestures, spoke his pleasure; sometimes on all fours, sometimes erect, he gambolled round them, and watching the moment, when Merlin was dissolving, or weaving some enchantment, he threw himself all along at Julia's feet, lifting the crape over him, saying, "Under thy fable curtain let me rest." A light dragoon sprung forward in an instant, and seizing the legs of the brute, would have hauled him from his station; but he had entangled himself so in the spangled robe,

robe, that without danger to the lady, he could not pursue his design. Julia was distressed and mortified, yet could not move. Merlin, turning from the person who had engaged him, applied the charm of his wand pretty smartly to the beast, at the same instant, that the light horseman made another effort with success; but the robe gave way, and the affrighted Julia was at liberty with the loss of half her garment. The beast scrambled into another room, and the dragoon again approached the lady, begging he might be allowed to stand near her as a sentinel, for fear of another attack, that though he had made a forced march, in order to join the present corps, he was ready to take up the post again, in her service; if she doubted him, he could produce a commission; which he actually did, by drawing a sealed letter from his pocket, directed by the hand of Gertrude. Julia concluded it to be St. Clair, and forgetting that he was not known to Lady Middleton, caught his arm, and begged the packet: He retreated, she kept her hold, leaving Merlin, and they insensibly got into the other room, when the sight of Caliban again assailed her. The dragoon taking her hand in his, placed it beneath his arm, and triumphantly led her round the apartment. The brute eyed them askant, but kept aloof. Merlin, not perfectly easy, followed them, and asked Julia, in a whisper, if she knew her conductor? She returned, St. Clair. Merlin seated himself, satisfied, till seeing the Indian Queen, with her slaves in train, he told her the unexpected news; she declared it was impossible, as Lady Middleton did not know St. Clair. Alarmed again, Merlin sought for Julia. He found her seated in deep discourse with the dragoon, who would not be persuaded to give her the letter.

Merlin

Merlin waved his wand : “ By my power I order thee to say who thou art ? ” “ Not what I seem to be, good necromancer,” said the mask. “ Then quit the Lady, or I will fetter thee five fathom-deep.” “ No, by the lady, I quit her not,” answered the soldier.

Julia began to suspect her mistake, and hastened to lay hold of the arm of the wizard, when the dragoon, putting his hand into his pocket, pulled out *the letter*, and withdrew his mask, and they beheld no other than Lord Maldown, who had taken a *short route* to London, from Yorkshire, by calling in South-Wales. Truth was, he did not relish any company, after quitting the party at the passage house, and had made a tour, under pretence of visiting his friends) quite alone about the country, till he thought he might, without appearing particular, make a call on Mrs. Byron, as en passant, in his road towards London. Gertrude had charged him with a packet for her friends, which he meant to have delivered, but on his arrival, he found his mother and sister preparing for the ball at Lady Middleton’s; and being assured of meeting the Mandville family there, he joined them, and soon found out, though hid in night, his once loved, and now ever to be admired Julia.

They were interrupted in their conversation by the tight jockey, who prayed the sable nymphs to join the dance; but she not knowing him who asked it, remained in full silence, till pressed again, she knew the voice of Lord John Raymond. Scarce had he spoke, when Caliban again drew near, and aiming to approach the Lady, made divers passages and cabriols. Lord John observed him; so did the dragoon; whether the same idea struck them both, or that the jockey

was the most expert; but he nimbly sprung upon the monster's back, and dealt the spur and whip so dexterously, that Caliban made for the door, and if his Lordship had not been as quick, in descending as he was in mounting, the brute would actually have carried him into the street, to amuse the mob.

The former returned to the company, who were in the most outrageous delight, and the monster appeared no more that evening.

Dancing and supper brought us to a late hour; and many of the party had already withdrawn. The chairs were ordered. There were only two of Sir Theodore's servants to be found; one of whom was Stephen, who was muttering and swearing at these worthless jackanapes, who could not withstand the temptation of drink.

As the ladies descended, there was a great bustle of chairs and chairmen jostling, and servants fighting; so that it was with difficulty they could get to their own, (for they were told by Stephen they had better not venture into the chairs, till they descended the steps) as the men were all drunk.

Lord Beauchamp led Miss Mandville, and Lord John Raymond Miss Julia. Miss Mandville hurried in to make way; and when Julia was going towards her chair, some of those intemperate wretches, rolled against, and overset it. Sir Theodore, who was behind, would have carried her back to the apartments, when at that instant a hackney chairman, seemingly sober, offered his chair. She got into it, in order to save trouble to her good friends; and they were bid to follow the other chair, which they did at a nimble rate. Sir Theodore was persuaded to go home in Lord John's carriage, which drew up soon after.

At

At the end of the street, Julia perceived Alicia's chair had turned the corner, and that her men were still in the same motion of the sedan, without advancing a single inch. She let down the window, to know why they did not proceed, when, without answering, they turned the opposite corner, and set off with her as fast as possible. She screamed instinctively, when in an instant a man jumped out of a carriage, which was standing in the street, and made towards the chair.

Gathering courage from the sight of the stranger, she cried, "Save me! save me whoever you are?"

He advanced, and ordering the chairman to stop, opened the door, and presented her his hand, which she accepted, begging him to conduct her to Sir Theodore Mandville's, in Albemarle-street. He bowed; but made no answer. Struck by his silence, she drew back, not knowing what to do; and at that instant perceived a sort of muffle about his face. She screamed again; when he seized her in his arms, endeavouring to reach the carriage; she struggled powerfully, and he was forced to stop for breath, in order to lift her in; when a man, flying down the street, struck him behind with such force, that he was obliged to let go his hold. The man halloo'd, watch, and dealt his blows promiscuously at the chairman and coachman, who had now jumped off his box, and a terrible affray followed. The gentleman very carefully went to the horses, to prevent their taking fright. Seeing three to one, a sort of odds in his favour, poor Julia sat down on a step, not knowing where to go, but ever and anon a scream of "watch! watch! watch!" The man had given the coachman a *composer*, and one of the chairmen had tasted, that a man's head, in the pit of the stomach,

mach, was hard of digestion ; but the other took more beating than enough ; and our hero's breath drew short, from fatigue, when the watchman's racket was the harbinger of joy to Julia, and the chairman took to his heels. The gentleman mounted the box, and whipping up the horses, passed by unheeded. As the watchmen made to the spot where the combatants lay, and from whence the screams proceeded, Julia rose, and going up to her deliverer, who was puffing and blowing in no very delicate plight ; she hoped he was not hurt ; when the well-known voice of Stephen sounded sweetly in her ear, " If I hadn't a miss'd e just in the nick of time, where would you a been now, Miss July ; but please take my arm, and these honest gentlemen will see us into better company than these here, who set their might against a woman."

The watchman asked some civil questions concerning the matter, and leaving two of his companions with the maimed, conducted the affrighted fair one, and her true knight, to Albemarle-street.

Poor Alicia was standing in the hall, with all the female servants round her ; (for every male was sent forth on different routes, and Sir Theodore and Lord John were also gone on the pursuit,) when Julia entered, and both bursting into tears, sunk into each other's arms ; not upon the ground, but on a bench, placed for the conveniency of the lazy tribe that crowd a great man's entry.

In this situation they were soon joined by Sir Theodore, who had returned to the house for intelligence, leaving Lord John Raymond challenging every one he met with, and running after every solitary chair, paceing homeward with its burthen : filling the people with the terror of being robbed,

robbed, by stopping them, and amazing them by retiring the moment he saw who they were.

The joy of seeing Julia once more safe under his protection, gave way a little on seeing the tears that were shed ; he scarce dared to interrogate ; but looking round, espied Stephen, with a bloody breast plate, of whom he ventured to ask particulars. Stephen pleased his honour by saying, Miss July was frightened a good deal ; but he didn't see cause for the tears, for he had tould her *he* was not hurt, and he took care she should get no blow amongst it ; for the fellow had dropped her on the first stroke, without he mought have gin her a fly pinch.

At any other time this account would have raised a laugh, but the business was now to compose every thing as fast as possible.

The ladies were conveyed to the drawing-room, where Sir Theodore soon joined them, after sending out in search of the pursuers to stop their career.

He now ventured to ask if Julia could account for this strange adventure. She recounted the whole affair, and added, as the gentleman was endeavouring to put her into the carriage, she had, by struggling, removed the muffle from his face ; that she was pretty certain as to the identity of the person ; but at present could say no more.

Lord John, making three steps up stairs, was now at the door ; she ceased from narrative to give the most grateful acknowledgments to her friends ; she kissed the hand of Sir Theodore, who held hers, and suffered his Lordship to press the other to his lips. Gratitude, at that moment, had so softened her mind, that if Stephen had been in view, Stephen might have kissed the other, if Sir Theodore had let it go ; howbeit, she asked

ed for him again and again; but he could not be visible till next morning.

As it was now day-light, Alicia persuaded her to go to rest; and after a thousand blessings and good nights, she retired. Fatigue brought her that repose which reflection would have driven away, and the clock struck twelve before she arose next day.

Every transaction of the evening now returned to her mind, and as she was certain as to the person of Mr. Wentworth, she wished herself at home, lest any other unpleasant frolic of his, might lead her into inextricable difficulties: She was resolved not to discover him, lest her friends might interfere, and bring on serious consequences; and she dreaded the pain it would give Lord Orwell, were his son's baseness made public. Neither could she think of her mother being informed of it.

She now seriously wished for retirement, and how to bring it about, was her mental occupation when Alicia entered; who tenderly inquired for her health, and wished her to remain for that day in her apartment, to recover herself; but Julia, though sensible of danger and a woman's fears, was not a fine lady in point of nervous affections; she found her health uninjured, and ventured the censure of being termed robust, rather than put on what did not belong to her; so they repaired to the breakfast-room; where they were hardly seated, before such a levee presented themselves, in order to make compliments on the late occasion, that Julia felt herself now really distressed. Lord Maldown, Lord Beauchamp, Lord John, Lord Orwell, and twenty other Lords and Ladies, were surrounding her; and very sorry was she, that

that such a speedy circulation of the adventure would make her a town subject for some time to come.

S H A P. XIII.

IT may not be amiss to leave Julia a little, in such good company, and pay our devoirs to the amiable and honourable Charles Wentworth; who, instead of going to France, had given that covering to a plan for returning to London, to lay in wait for a moment of sweet revenge.

His intelligence concerning the transactions of his own, and Sir Theodore's family, was to be depended on; and he formed the pretty scheme of carrying off Miss Julia, to avenge her scorn, and distress Lord Orwell. He had suited the character of Caliban to his own sentiments, but intended it merely to disguise his figure at the masquerade, where he thought to have compleated his design. After the rough treatment he had met with that evening, his mind became perfectly in tune for the task; and he retired to equip himself anew, by putting on clothes like his servants, and with whom he soon returned to the spot of action; and falling into conversation with the lacqueys in waiting, inveigled those of Sir Theodore to a porter house, where he treated them with porter, half spirits, till they were no longer able to hear, see, or understand. He then hired a hackney chair, and

and his man changed clothes with one chairman, while the other prepared to follow his instructions, which were to act, as you have seen before, reader, by looking back a few pages.

He got into his carriage, and drove slowly on, till he saw his prize quit her convoy; on her screaming, he thought himself quite secure, by offering his services; finding, however, that she made some demur, he seized her, when Stephen saluted his back with a blow that caused an immediate resignation of his prey. Unaccustomed to manual chastisement, he deputed his coachman to avenge the deed; and taking charge of the cavalry, formed the worthy resolution, if his champions were defeated, to drive in upon his enemy, and trample him to death, and then carry off the Lady. The watchmen appearing, prevented this scheme from being put in force; and he was glad to wheel off in much confusion, and mad as a tiger, though glad to quit London next day very like an humbler animal.

As soon as all these good and great personages had broke up the levee at the Baronet's, Julia sought for an opportunity of making her acknowledgments to the hero of her last night's adventure. But it was not easily to be procured. Mr. Stephen had received a well-aimed blow, which came in contact with his right cheek bone: The effect was, a hillock of dusky hue arose, which obscured the sunshine of his eye, and he kept aloof, not choosing to present to public view those trophies of war which might afford a double indication.

As she found it unlikely to procure an interview, she thought of the waiting woman (that necessary agent in any clandestine matter between a lady and a *gentleman*.)

Lucy

Lucy was summoned. " My good girl," said Julia, " will you do me a kindness ? "

" Most certainly, madam," answered the abigail; " any thing in my poor powers."

" Take then this pocket-book; from the make it will serve for either the deposit of tobacco, or billet doux; the lock is strong and silver; the initials I. G. carry it to Stephen; tell him to mark within it the day of the month he saved me; and likewise tell him whatever it contains besides, is his; and on no account to return it, for it will not be received."

Lucy departed, with her commission, but after crossing the hall, before she mounted the other staircase, she just stepped into the garden, to peep into the pocket-book, for fear of a mistake; but seeing only a five guinea note, she replaced it, and went faithfully to discharge the duty she had undertaken.

Stephen was very busy applying rotten apples to the aggrieved protuberance; when hearing a female step, for which he had a remarkable partiality, he turned round, and beheld the extended hand of Lucy with the proffered gift. He took the book, hand and all, and ventured it to his lips, never considering there was still a hand at liberty to cuff his ears; but Lucy, who at any other time might have slighted poor Stephen, and applied the vacant hand, now thought none but the brave deserve the fair; and his last night's exploit had so raised him in the ideas of the second rates of this family, that had he touched the lip instead of the hand, the compliment would have been acknowledged.

Lucy delivered her message exactly; Stephen was at first refractory; but on hearing it could not be returned, " Tell Miss July," said he, " when I dies, this shall be buried in my coffin."

Julia,

Julia, as I before mentioned, now seriously wished to quit London : but how to bring it about, she could not determine. There were at least two months still to run over, before the time for their retiring to the country ; and if young Theodore arrived, as was expected, they might possibly prolong their stay in town. To own her fears of being run away with, would have been making herself of too much consequence ; and to suppress suspicion was out of her power ; so that anxiety hung about her, and deprived her of the composure that naturally belonged to her : She pleaded for some time the having caught cold by sitting in the street, after quitting the heated apartment ; but that, now could not prove an excuse for staying at home ; and her friends finding her more thoughtful than usual, pressed her into company, in order to disperse her chagrin.

At this period, she had an account from her mother, that Gertrude had at last been induced by St. Clair, to give her promise of being united to him, before he left England ; and if Mrs. Byron's health continued to mend, she was to accompany him to Asia ; but with this clause, that in five years he should return and settle, let their competency be ever so small, near her family.

St. Clair had willingly assented to all these preliminaries, and further added, that nothing should tempt him to return to Asia, but the view of making her comfortable for life, by an addition to their fortunes.

Julia felt no great joy at this intelligence ; but as her sister seemed to think it out of the nature of things, to marry any man but St. Clair, she was glad an event should take place, that proved propitious to her wishes.

About this time they were agreeably surprised
by

by a visit from Captain Gordon, who had left his party to the care of a serjeant, during a fortnight that he meant to pass in town.

On his being announced, Alicia's cheeks took a crimson hue, and she stepped to the window, to attend to an organ she *thought* she heard; but 'twas a mistake; and the manœuvre did not save her confusion from being visible enough.

George touched the cheek of his relation, and sought the same privilege from Miss Mandville, on the score of adoption; but she drew back; he bowed, and told her 'twas the soldier's fortune sometimes to be rebuffed, but it only made them more watchful for a happier moment of attack.

"Beware of falling into an ambuscade," cried Alicia.

"Tis the very wish of my heart," said the Captain. "Only take the pains to form an ambuscade, and I shall surrender myself your prisoner, heart, soul, and body.

"I could find an inclination to call you saucy, Mr. Gordon, only I have not time to quarrel with you now, till I bid you welcome to the house, and send for my father, who will be rejoiced to see you."

She then rang the bell, and Sir Theodore soon joined them, and presented the hand of friendship, which was gratefully accepted by the young soldier. The next thing was a proposition from the Baronet, to make his house the home of the Captain for the time being: But George had too great a respect for the owner, and too little opinion of his own déorum, to be an inmate in a mansion, whence every excess was banished: Sir Theodore was the votary, though not the slave of pleasure. It was concluded, then, that a cover and chair should be always ready at the hour of dinner,

dinner, in Albemarle-street ; and when Mr. Gordon could avoid any other engagement, he should fulfil the prior and general one, at Sir Theodore's.

In the course of the history of past events, since they left Bath, the adventure of Julia was spoken of by Alicia, to the great mortification of that lady, who could have wished it a matter sunk into oblivion ; but Miss Mandville's vivacity led her to say any thing that first presented itself to her fancy, though she would not willingly have given pain to her greatest enemy.

George changed colour during the repetition of the story ; and when it was concluded, demanded if any inquiry had been made in order to find out the villain ? He was assured no means of information had been left untried, and with how little success. " But what, my pretty cousin, were your conjectures of this affair ? you saw the face ; if you knew the man, pray let me into the secret ? "

Julia was ready to die with terror ; she looked at Alicia with discontent, and knew not how to proceed ; at length she declared, nothing but a future affront should tempt her to mention who her suspicions fell upon, and entreated the subject should be no more repeated, lest it might reach her mother's ears, and make her causelessly uneasy.

This account lay like a lump of lead in young Gordon's stomach. The honour of the family was uppermost, and it ill accorded with the insult.

Poor Alicia bit her tongue, and looked piteously at Julia. Company coming in, matters took another turn, and for the present all was forgotten.

At this time nothing was so much the topic as the speedy union of Lord Duncain with Miss Middleton ; and our young friends were busied every

every morning in attendance upon her, giving their taste and opinions on sundry articles of dress, and other ornaments, to be displayed on this splendid occasion.

Lady Middleton determined to have an old fashioned wedding, and the preparations were excessive; even Miss Mortimer descended from the sublime, in the cause of her niece, and Miss Farrington was officially attentive in promoting matters.

There is no occupation so interesting as hymeneal preparations; there is a delight not to be expressed, certainly in the business; for I never saw the face that did not wear a smile when it was thus employed. If you go to your taylor, and order a suit of clothes, and he has a wedding coat in hand, he significantly smiles, when he tells you, "you must wait." If you go to your lawyer when settlements are drawing, he significantly tells you, a young couple are impatient, and with a smile adds, "you must wait." If you want a new coach, and the bride's is bespoke, the maker, with smiles points to the becoming lining, and hopes "you are not in a hurry;" and so on, through tradesmen, friends, and relations. Whatever may be the sentiments of the parties themselves, it seems to be a good joke to the by-standers.

Sir Theodore was to give the Lady away, Lord John Raymond and Lord Beauchamp, to attend as bridemen, and Alicia and Julia as bridesmaids.

A ball and supper was to take place the evening of the day, and every mark of satisfaction to be displayed.

This was not perfectly consonant to the wishes of Miss Middleton, who would gladly have escaped from bustle and parade on the occasion; but from her infancy her mother had promised herself

self the arrangement of this business, and she could not oppose her in a point that seemed to give her so much pleasure.

Alicia wanted to bring about an invitation for Captain Gordon; yet how to manage it, as the company had been all named, she could not decide. Fortunately Sir Theodore spared her the trouble on that score, taking upon him, as father of the feast, to introduce one more son of joy.

On the morning of the happy day Lord Duncairn contrived through the medium of the house-keeper, to place a band of musicians in the garden. About eight in the morning they struck up, "Let beauty with the sun arise," and awakened his charming mistress to elysium. She quitted her bed with the delightful idea of giving herself to the beloved of her heart. The instruments were heavenly, and her soul was tuned to harmony. Her thoughts run in no rapid transport; but flowing through the peaceful mansion of innocence, glided in calm happiness to perfect bliss.

Her Lord met her as she descended the staircase, and taking that hand he was soon to call his own, pressed it gently to his bosom, and encircling her waist with the other arm, conducted her into the room; where her friends were all assembled, to partake of a breakfast, sumptuous in its kind; beside the usual preparation of teas, coffee, and chocolate, sweet meats, pines, grapes, confectionary, and a thousand different devices, spread over the tables,—castles, temples, altars, doves, cupids, and hymen were here, there, and every where. In short, 'twas a finer breakfast than either Bath, Brighton, Cheltenham, or Tunbridge, ever exhibited; and not a bit like what has been seen or tasted at any of them.

The music played in the hall soft soothing numbers;

bers; and it was almost eleven before the carriages drew up, to convey them to St. George's church.

The ladies were all in elegant half dress, reserving the magnificent for the evening's ball; and the bishop of —— performed a ceremony that gave one of the best of women to an equally deserving man.

No tears were shed,—no sighs were heard, as was formerly the fashion, when a woman was following her own inclination. The bridegroom led her smiling from the altar: and the procession followed in high order, according to Lady Midleton's arrangement.

On their entering the house, the music struck up, Happy, happy, happy pair; and after playing near an hour, some favourite concertos, the company separated, to put on those ornaments none of them stood in need of.

They all met at dinner, which I shall not attempt to describe: 'Twas more than paper can express, or hungry poets fancy when they dream.

The ball consisted of thirty-six ladies and gentlemen. Miss Mandville was under a necessity of dancing one or two dances with Lord Beauchamp, but afterwards gave her hand to the young soldier. Julia also danced sometime with Lord John, but designedly changed frequently in the course of the evening. She more than once was honoured by the bridegroom's hand; but George Gordon kept his post, in spite of the frequent attempts of the enemy; he not only danced with Alicia the whole evening, but profited so by opportunity, as more than half to disclose a sincere attachment he felt for her; and though she parried the attack with wonderful vivacity, yet some random shots made her sensible she was not invulnerable.

Lord Beauchamp felt mortified, but in compliment

ment to the day, hushed every care; which, however, did not fail to awaken him on his retiring to rest. He had, 'tis true, never met those encouraging glances that denote the success of a lover; yet as he had never noticed a preference given to any other, he presumed to hope much from time and assiduity; but a few hours had at once convinced him, that his competitor had already advanced more in that space, than himself in as many months.

C H A P. XIV.

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THIS joyful party, some few days after, met an alloy to their pleasure, from another letter from young Mandville, accounting for his not returning in the ship appointed; she unfortunately had run foul of a vessel in the night, and disabled herself for some time from proceeding on her voyage; but he should take the next conveyance; and trusted, in the course of a few months, to be able to make up for the double disappointment to himself and friends.

This was a mortifying delay to Sir Theodore, who, for some time, had been very solicitous for his son's return. He had amassed a noble fortune, and satisfied with enough, his only wish was to see him settled in his native land, and making himself useful to his country, by being a true and faithful representative of a very loyal county, who held forth their hands to offer him their first vacancy.

This

This letter seemed to have changed the whole aspect of affairs in Albemarle-street. Sir Theodore could not disguise his chagrin; Alicia wept the absence of her brother, in double drops, for George Gordon had left town; and Julia, oppressed by her own apprehensions, gave a responsive sigh to each of her friends. In this moment, when the languor of those she loved, hung so heavy on them, she ventured her proposal for their leaving London; suggesting to them, that as the spring was far advanced, air and exercise would recruit their spirits; and if they would consent to pass a month at the Manor, they would probably be met by Sir Theodore, on their arrival at Bellegont.

Mr. St. Clair's being at the Manor would afford a more pleasant society; and Mr. Gordon had promised Julia, on her return home, to pass ten or twenty days with them; so that altogether she held forth a party to the view of her friends, as inviting as it was possible.

Sir Theodore seemed not to disapprove of this plan, and Alicia was delighted with it; but politeness and attention to Lady Duncairn prevented them from putting it in immediate execution, till all the necessary etiquette, such as being presented, &c. &c. were over.

The Baronet could not, however, forbear mentioning his intentions the next evening, at supper, at Lady Middleton's; where was also Lord John Raymond, and many more pleasant people.

His Lordship was sitting between Miss Mandville and Julia, when this intelligence was proclaimed; he caught a hand of each and vehemently pronounced, "Let *me* go too: What will become of me in this dreary waste, when you are gone? Duncairn is going to take this whole family

ly down to Scotland ; and of late I have so habituated myself to your societies, I cannot relish my old intimates, and faith they have voted me a bore when I do go amongst them."

Julia blushed exceedingly ; neither was it diminished, by a low voice that, half aside, said, " You do not, or will not, know half I feel at this instant." She withdrew her hand, and holding it out, begged a pinch of snuff from Lady Middleton's box.

Lord John's vivacity was fled ; no brilliant fancy escaped him the rest of the evening ; and as he handed Julia to the coach, he cursed his stars, begged her pardon, and pressed her unwilling hand to his breast. She was very glad to be relieved from all this, and on retiring, began to inquire of her own mind, why all those incoherencies ? But as she found her heart free from tumult, she did not disturb her fancy any more with recent occurrences ; but slept in peace with every man on earth, but Wentworth, with whom of late she had been used to quarrel in her dreams.

Far otherwise was it with Lord John ; he had dismissed his maid, and throwing himself into an easy chair, began to ruminate. He was really in love, and yet dared not declare his passion ; his fortunes were broken, and what had he to offer ? a heart and a title ; could he propose marriage and beggary to the object of his wishes,—No, no ! On the other hand, could he suffer her to remain in ignorance of what he *would* do, if he had the power ? Could he let her depart without relieving his soul, by telling her how he adored her. In short, the pros and cons so tormented him, that at eight o'clock the next morning, he was still in the chair, weary of self debate, and undetermined upon any thing. The sun shone full into

into the window; looking at his watch, he thought, perhaps, at this very instant Julia had opened her eyes to a new day; he rung the bell, ordered his man to dress him, and hurried out of the house.

Jean Baptiste had been accustomed, after New Market meetings, to see his Lord in those spleenetic moods; but looking at the bed, and seeing it in perfect propriety at this time of day, he began to form odd suggestions, and did not know well how to determine whether it was the loss of his master's wits or his money that had occasioned the last night's watching.

At nine Lord John found himself in the breakfast parlour in Albemarle-street, without one single resolve upon how he was to act; but as the door was not quite shut, he espied a petticoat crossing the hall; he stepped forth hastily, and detaining it by a pull behind, said, in a whisper, though no one was near, "Is Miss Gordon up?" Lucy, turning round, with a courtesy, replied, "Yes, my lord, she is reading in the drawing room, till my lady comes down?"

As he was in perfect intimacy with Sir Theodore, and the servants accustomed to his coming to breakfast without form, no one paid any attention to what he was about, and he marched up stairs, without any one announcing him, and presented himself before Julia with a pale face, and a haggard eye, to her no small terror and surprise. Putting Shakespeare into her pocket, she exclaimed, "What ails you, Lord John? Sure you are ill? Why this early visit?"

"I am ill; I am sick of love," replied he; "torn by internal contest; I doat to distraction; yet having nothing to give, dare make no offer. I swear I love with such a holy purity, that I could live upon a smile; but even that I dare not

ask. Could I bring the object to my wishes, then even should I curse myself. Oh fortune ! beggary !"

Here his nose gushed out such a torrent of blood, that Julia, who had been drying a tear her tragedy had cost her, before Lord John's entrance, applied her handkerchief to his face, and rung the bell for help. It streamed plentifully, and by the time water, vinegar, and other applications were administered, he had lost as much blood as reduced that irritation of the mind to a more placid circulation; and being joined by Sir Theodore and Miss Mandville, whose astonishment were equal, he began to apologize for his early visit, and the circumstances that had followed; but the ladies went down in no small terror, leaving him with Sir Theodore and Stephen, who had brought linen and a waistcoat to exchange for the soiled ones; but he dismissed Stephen, and begged a few moment's conversation with his worthy friend, which being granted, he began by avowing his sentiments towards the young Lady; and worked so much upon his own feelings by the repetition of his distress, that Sir Theodore feared a return of the bleeding, and began to check that impetuosity first by yielding to his opinions, and then placing every impropriety in that point of view, so that they might be very obvious.

Sir Theodore gained much upon him from the gentleness of his manners, and soothed him by persuasion. He pointed out the youth of both parties, and the probability of a great change in their fortunes in the revolution of a few years, and gained, so far an ascendency as to be allowed another lesson of documents before his Lordship should proceed any further in the business.

Lord John then begged a chair might be ordered,

ed, and leaving his excuses with his friend for the ladies, he, attended by Stephen, proceeded to his own house.

When Monsieur saw his Lord with marks of violence about him, he began to prance with fifty ma fois, from one side to the other. Stephen, looking at him with great disgust, bid him go along for the doctor, and not caper about there like a monkey in convulsions.

Stephen prepared the bed immediately; giddiness had overpowered the efforts his Lordship made to get the better of his complaint, and he was under a necessity of laying down, because he could stand no longer.

Before the doctor arrived, Sir Theodore was at the door, being anxious for the state of the lover: He was sorry to find the struggle of passions had brought on strong symptoms of a fever, and now waited with fatherly care, the result of medical deliberation. Doctor D—— declared it necessary to use every means to reduce the irritation, ordering his patient to be kept very quiet and very low. He wrote his prescriptions, and Baptiste was sent to the apothecary, while Stephen was ordered not to quit his Lordship till he was better. Sir Theodore having promised to visit him again in the afternoon, went home, and now solicited a conversation with Julia, which he easily obtained. As he had ever found her above disguise he ventured to ask her, on her veracity, if she did not give a preference to Lord John Raymond. To which she candidly answered, that she preferred him to any young man she had seen in London; but he was equally on a footing in her affections with George Gordon, St. Clair, Lord Maldown, or Lord Duncairn. Sir Theodore could not refrain from smiling at the distinguished preference she

she gave to so ardent a lover, and calling her the fair insensible, left her, very sorry for Lord John, but dubious within himself, if she was *insensible*.

In the evening his Lordship fell into a slumber, so Sir Theodore's visit reached no further than the anti-chamber; and the next morning, when he called, his Lordship was so much better, from Stephen paying attention to the Doctor's orders, in giving the medicines at proper periods, that scarce any fever remained. He would willingly have fallen again into his favourite subject, but the Baronet laid an absolute prohibition on the topic, advising him, by all means, the moment he could travel, to go to Paris for some time; where change of scene, if it did not obliterate past ideas, would dissipate those heavy moments that might be only intervened between him and his greatest happiness: Thus, by flattering hopes, and more found reasoning, was our noble youth, let into the only method that could restore him to tranquillity. As he soon removed, Sir Theodore advised him not to venture the form of taking leave; but the baronet, in his turn, was forced to comply with conditions, before this point could be gained. Imprimis, they were to deliver an open letter to Julia, from him, (Lord John) where he avowed every sentiment of his heart, his poverty and ruined fortunes, adding, it was in flight only he could seek for safety: Bitter alternative! but imploring her permission, if a change happened for the better, he might be allowed to avow his passion at her feet.

The Baronet could not prevail on him to give up writing the letter; nay, on no other terms would he consent to quit the kingdom; so he was forced to comply; insisting, however, that no answer was to be expected; as it would be next to entering

entering into an engagement, allowing that when it suited, he might throw himself at her feet; that he must be content to rest upon chance for that event; for he could never advise his charge (as he called her) to enter into an engagement of that sort. My Lord sighed, delivered the letter, which was ready written, and next morning Stephen came to his master's room, to say, Lord John had set off for Paris at six o'clock, without one single consolation, save the handkerchief which Julia had applied on the first effusion of blood, which he had carefully preserved. This relic he guarded, after its being restored to its primitive purity, holy and sacred, in the sanctum sanctorum next his heart; and with no other companion than Jean Baptiste, he silently took the road to Dover.

Julia was very much affected with this account, which Sir Theodore gave, when he delivered the letter, she could not suppress a tear: It was a tribute to sentiment; she felt how much she was obliged by the deference paid her, and gratefully confessed, that the best wish of her mind should be for the happiness of a man who certainly knew how to love.

Lord Duncairn now heartily wished to get out of London; the forms and ceremonies he had been held by were too long and irksome; he was anxious to rejoice the hearts of those that had loved him from childhood in his own domains; and had a jewel to present, he knew, would hold its real estimation amongst them. He pressed Lady Middleton to name a day for their departure; and the Thursday following her Ladyship's travelling coach was ordered up, which, with Lord Duncairn's post-chaise, was to convey the party to Scotland. They arranged it so, as to pass the day preceding their journey in Albemarle-street;

and

and Julia had the satisfaction to learn, that Sir Theodore had already made Mrs. Byron acquainted, that the same Thursday would see his family set off for Wales.

Lady Maldown and Lady Sophia made up the set for the farewell dinner; but Lord Maldown was again upon the scamper, nobody knew where, though he had hinted at an intention of calling on his Welsh aunt, to prepare her for the intended visit of his mother and sister, when the summer advanced.

The day passed in uninterrupted good humour, and the evening concluded by mutual promises of keeping up the ardour of their friendship, by frequent exchange of letters. They separated at a late hour, and next morning saw them take their different routes.

Julia was elevated beyond her usual composure; she was delighted at the view of seeing all that she loved, and that loved her, united in one circle; but Julia was too diffident, all that loved her, could not be confined in that narrow space.

Miss Mandville sung, laughed, made conundrums, and challenged them at travelling piquet: her vivacity knew no bounds; and between them both Sir Theodore had forgot his disappointment, at least, for the present: - They travelled at a good rate, and made the first day's journey full ninety miles.

A few miles before they reached C——, they sent off Stephen, to bespeak beds, and if none could be had, to have a relay of horses ready to carry them on to Gloucester, and another post chaise for Miss Lucy and the valet de chambre, who were in the rear. About four miles from ——, they saw, by the moon-light, two men, very well mounted, pass the carriage, and soon after

after turn and reconnoitre them. The ladies were alarmed; but Sir Theodore told them, so distant from London, no danger was to be feared from highwaymen. The postillion, on the front horses, was soon heard to say, with an oath "he would not stop," and whipping up his cattle, a blow was dealt that brought him to the ground. Sir Theodore was unarmed; the ruffians came up to the window; he placed himself in front of it, and demanded why he was stopped? The fellow trembled, but bid him get out, and they would not hurt him. The Baronet felt no inclination to alight, therefore did not comply with the order; but Alicia, putting her head out of the other window, screamed to Alberti, the valet de chambre, to get out. He did so, after numberless efforts to open the chaise door, which had no other impediment but his holding it very fast through the impulse of fear. The fellow who stood on Sir Theodore's side seemed to have dallied, in order to gain time for a signal from his commanding officer; but on viewing the descent of Signor Alberti, he hastily opened the chaise, and struggled for the collar of Sir Theodore, who resisted powerfully, buffetting the fellow's face and ears with the might of an Hercules; at length, from an effort of the man, and his own confined situation, they both fell together under the chaise. The screams of the ladies, when Sir Theodore fell, were dreadful; even the Italian stepped forward; but Julia and Alicia were in an instant on the ground, and had actually got hold of the ruffian's skirts, and dragged him, so as to give breath to the Baronet, when they were joined by Lucy. No fire arms appearing, they all exerting their might; when Julia felt herself seized, and bore away in a man's arms. Her cries

were redoubled, and every effort of strength again exerted; but she was too feeble alone, to have any power over her enemy. He flung her across the horse, half dead, and mounting behind her, rode off, endeavouring to place her more at her ease, in his flight. The fellow, who had held down the Baronet, by falling uppermost, now quitted his hold, to return to his horse; but the post-boy, who had been intimidated by his comrades holding the reins of his horses, seeing every thing with more perspicuity and less action, had mounted it before him, and was just on the point of overtaking the runaway. This ruffian finding himself pursued so unexpectedly, and so closely, was at his ne plus ultra. He gave his horse the spur; but the start it produced added to the uncertain seat of two on one saddle threw him one way, and the *Lady* the other. The postillion not standing on the laws of honour, layed on his whip, as he would have done unto a mule, upon the fallen enemy, who winced and kicked, and seemed very restive; but getting on his feet, and seeing the cavalcade advancing, he took an opportunity, while the boy was looking if the lady was dead, to spring once more on his pegasus, who winged his way quickly, with one burthen, to the regions of secrecy.

The postillion was endeavouring to procure respiration to the lifeless maid, by rubbing her hands and temples, when the dismayed and terrified groupe came up. Alicia, whose every idea five minutes before was given to her father's danger, now funk down beside her friend, deluging her face and bosom with tears. Lucy, who had a bottle of Eau de Luce, tried its effects, but in vain; and they began to fear some dreadful blow in the fall from the horse, had closed a life of innocence, to create an angel.

C H A P. XVIII.

SIGNOR ALBERTI had, by this time, brought up the carriages; and the fallen postillion had regained his senses; when Sir Theodore lifted up his charge; and by the assistance of his daughter and maid, placing her in it, supported her in the most easy position, till they reached a cottage; where they procured some water, vinegar, &c. and happy were they to hear a heavy sigh pronounce returning life: A few minutes, and she opened her eyes, and casting them on her friend, cried, "Sweet Alicia!" Then closing them again, tears broke their confines down her lovely cheeks; and the frame seemed dissolving in the shower, silent and unmoved, and still as death.

Sir Theodore forgot it was unmanly to weep; Miss Mandville could not stand it: she wrung her hands; and vehement in sorrow as in joy, she told her woe.

A good woman, who was sitting in the corner when they entered, asked leave to go for Doctor Butler, that lived hard by, and was, she said, a main clever gentleman. This being instantly assented to, she departed with Alberti, who was desired to hasten the surgeon by every possible means. This honest gentleman was just gone to bed, after bringing two good subjects to King George⁶, from a gardener's wife that had seven children before; and he was in what is commonly called his first sleep, when he was awakened by a rap, sufficient to announce a Duchess, at the same time heard a voice, half Italian, half English, pray his

his instant attendance on a young lady, who lay dead, not far off. This very good man put on his slippers and gown, and with no other attire, accompanied the valet to the hovel: Very unlike a member of that fraternity, who being sent for to a lady, who was in the act of strangling, by a piece of stringy meat sticking in her throat, ordered the messenger to say, he was coming, and resumed his seat, to finish his dinner.

Pardon, good reader? To digress in such a moment, is not to feel; but having a presentiment, that my fair one would recover, I told you the story, while Mr. Butler was searching for a pulse. He applied the lancet once or twice, and at length the vital spring launched to the veins, and life and breath returned. "Dear Mr. Butler!" cried Alicia. "Sweet Mr. Butler!" said Lucy. "Excellent Mr. Butler!" added Sir Theodore. "Lord, Sir!" rejoined Lucy; "and the worthy gentleman has got no stockings on, nor even a waistcoat, as I shall answer!" Then all turning again to Julia, they renewed their congratulations on her amendment; and she, gathering her ideas as her strength returned, soon recollect ed her situation; and kissed and pressed the hands that held her a thousand times.

Mr. Butler very politely offered his house to accommodate them; but Julia said she was sure she could bear the carriage as far as the inn; and the Doctor promising to be with them early in the morning, she was lifted in, and they moved slowly on till they reached C——; where every thing was ready for their reception. Julia was conveyed to bed, and Lucy sat up, while Alicia only lay down in the same room, though her spirits were worn to a thread by the late exertions.

Alberti gave a detail of this strange adventure
to

to Stephen, during the time they were solacing over a bowl of punch and supper. The Cornish Knight hinted a reflection on the inactivity of the Italian, swearing had he been there, no man, nor men should have hauled his honour from the carriage. The Italian pleaded his having no stiletto, or he certainly would have gone behind, and stabbed him.

" You are but a little fellow, it is true," cried Stephen, eyeing him obliquely; " but, egad, if I were such a rascal as to use that there odd thing, as you call it, he should see it to his face, before I stuck him; and I believe I should bid un take care also."

The Italian never disputed with Stephen; always confessing him for his superior; So pleading drowsiness, he retired; as did his comrade, not in very high good humour.

The Doctor returned in the morning; and hearing his patient was dozing, sat down with Sir Theodore; who made every inquiry possible concerning the people that had attacked them. They were not robbers; or why did they not seek either lives or money? and who the person could be, that made so daring an attempt, he could not conceive: It could not surely be Lord John: And yet, who could it be? Mr. Wentworth had been some time on the continent, and his father had heard from him, dated Chantilly.

Lucy appearing to say, Miss Julia was awake, put an end to these cogitations. Mr. Butler found her much better; only complaining of a pain in her chest, which, from her great exertion and struggles, might naturally be supposed to follow. She did not recollect her fall from the horse; losing her memory as soon as she was flung across it. She declared her intention of continuing the journey

journey that day, in order to be under the care of her mother, and to spare her friends, who called her unkind, as they had sufficiently proved the tender interest they took in all that concerned her.

The Doctor saw no immediate cause for suspending their journey; yet advised precaution, and to make the stages easy; and by no means to suffer any agitation that could be avoided. The Baronet, surprised at the disinterested counsel of the man of physic, felt the esteem he had already conceived for him greatly heightened; and would have persuaded him to go on with them, for fear of a return of Julia's complaint; and, indeed, with a view of proposing to him an establishment of some permanency,—which appeared, in his present situation, to be very doubtful.

Mr. Butler offered his services as far as twelve hours could convey them; but as the aforementioned gardener's wife, and some others, of the like high rank, were under his care; he charged his conscience to return in twelve more, lest any mishap should befall them from his absence. More and more astonished at such an uncommon instance of true Christianity, he took him into the garden, presented him a ten pound note, and opened a view of the plan he intended for him.

The note he looked at, as if debating whether he should or should not accept of it; till, at length, turning round, he said, "If I refuse your gift, you might deem it affectation: You are rich, I am poor; your pleasure is, that I *should* take it. Your noble proposal I cannot answer, without consideration: But my gratitude prompts me to acknowledgments which I know would pain you.

"I will write to you, my good Sir; and in a few weeks I shall have weighed my present situation against your liberality.

The

The carriages now drawing up, Sir Theodore shook the doctor heartily by the hand, and dispensed with his taking a fatiguing jaunt, at the desire of Julia; who declared she found no occasion for his further attendance; and after thanking him, (and endeavouring to force some gold into his hand, which he put back.) They lifted her in, and placing pillows as a support. The company departed in tolerable good spirits, considering all things.

I should do very ill, reader, to say our fair friend was perfectly at her ease, either in mind or body; but what did it avail her to complain; it did not lessen her own ills, but would create anxiety in others: Her first care was then, to beseech the Baronet, not to disclose the reality of the circumstances to her mother and sisters; but place her altered looks to the fright the highwayman had occasioned her. He joined in her idea, that there was no absolute necessity for giving an alarm to her family; but insisted, that it should not preclude his taking every possible means of finding out the cause of such strange effects; she objected not to private inquiry; but for making the matter public by advertisements and rewards, she prayed that such methods might never be taken.

The nearer they approached the Cambrian mountains, the more her heart rejoiced; and very angry she was when Sir Theodore ordered his carriage to be put up for that night, fearing fatigue would be too much for her.

The next evening they turned off the turnpike road. The tall elms nodded their lofty heads, to salute them; the weather-cock glittered, in the setting sun, above the mansion; the front gates were repaired and thrown open; the weeds were rooted out; the briars cast into the fire; and the green

green carpet under foot was smooth and mossy. All this had been the busines of St. Clair, who, with his man, whil'd away an hour each day, to keep it proper.

Mrs. Byron appeared; but her young train soon outstepped her: True it was, they leaped down four or five steps at a time: And scarce were they alighted before one voice, one action, ran through the whole company.

Mrs. Byron gave a hand to Sir Theodore and another to Alicia, and bending forward, Julia hung upon her neck, and really wept: A thousand thoughts rushed upon her mind at once—and she hid her face in her mother's bosom.

Gertrude, unwilling that she should suffer herself to be thus overcome, reproached her for neglect; and quitting Alicia, she took her arm, and asked, if there was nothing left for her; and, (pointing to St. Clair) she added, "There is a poor mendicant also, soliciting a small boon." Julia held out her other hand, and gently pulling him towards her, gave him her cheek, which he, like a true soldier, turned to its proper place, and touched the lip,—"Fye on thee, son-of Mars!" Agnes held the hall door in her hand; her black eyes sparkled with delight, while the party ascended the steps. Julia kissed her very affectionately; Alicia shook hands with her; and Sir Theodore hailed her, as his little nurse.

"Oh Stephen! Stephen! thy heart beats time with vulcan's hammer; she looks so pretty; that brown stuff jacket and petticoat bound with blue; the clean heel, and neat seal skin pump, is altogether so becoming. Agnes, could I but dare give thee one kiss, after this long absence," he would have said; but fate cut him short by a half averted look from the fair, who now advanced to pay her

her compliments, once more to Lucy; and shutting the hall door, the scene closed from my view.

The altered looks of her daughter did not pass unobserved by Mrs. Byron, who thought a town life had not improved her beauty; but rejoicing to get her home again, she trusted to fresh air, and regular hours, for restoration of her charms.

They now began to be a little rational, and refreshments were brought in, when the fall of a large screen called every body's attention. Lord Maldown stood confessed to view, who had arrived the day before, and secreted himself on hearing the carriages, till the meeting was over to give an additional surprise to the strangers. A loud scream and a laugh followed the overthrow of the screen, and mutual congratulations were exchanged between his Lordship and the Baronet on this unexpected rencontre.

A blush, (whether conscious or unconscious I know not,) overspread the cheek of Armenia. There is no doubt but in the frequent visits my Lord had made at the manor, some opportunity had served to breathe those gentle vows proceeding from his soul, to her he loved; but at her age, she felt that timid backwardness which prevented her from confessing any thing; she dared not venture on the subject to her mother; and till that could be accomplished she avoided these meetings so ardently sought by the lover: Enough, however, was to be gathered from her artless partiality, to feed his passion, till a more happy moment might arrive, to make public the sincerity and honour of his views.

Mrs. Byron saw, with some concern, the real state of Lord Maldown's mind; she had not a doubt as to the propriety of his attachment to her daughter; yet she could not suppose his mother would

would join his wishes, towards a union that could bring *only* intrinsic merit to her family. She had thought of opening her sentiments on this matter to Sir Theodore by letter; but finding they were to be so soon her guests, she deferred entering on the subject till they met: Predetermined, howbeit, not to suffer her daughter to be forced into a connexion where all, but one, of the family might deem her an inferior.

Whatever were Mrs. Byron's opinions, my Lord had taken a means of advantage, neither he nor she was aware of, videlicet, that of telling his story first; and the very morning, after the arrival of Sir Theodore, they walked out together; and Lord Maldown, throwing aside those tremors that so often impeded his best oration, made a long and nervous speech, which met no interruption from his hearer. What he said was very much to the purpose, I take for granted; for after proceeding quite through the grounds, they strayed to the foot of a shaggy mountain, where a river presented its serpentine course to obstruct their further progress. It is mighty probable the lover would have continued his walk without perceiving the impediment, if Sir Theodore, tenacious of a gouty foot, had not observed, it were quite as well to turn about, as go on. He had been arrested by the button, fifty times, before they had reached this spot; therefore, seating himself, to recover a little, (being unused to pedestrian exercise) he gave it as his advice and opinion, that every thing relative to the case should be submitted to Lady Maldown; and as a few weeks would bring them together, he, Sir Theodore, would open the business.

My Lord, much lighter for disemburthening his mind, now apologized for having insensibly drawn

drawn Sir Theodore to such a distance from the house, and offering his arm, they returned time enough to dress for dinner.

C H A P. XIX.

MRS. BYRON had now a very large family to accommodate. Agnes had been assisted for some months by the old woman, who was taken again into the house for the rough work; and Stephen took up his old post at the side board, while St. Clair's valet acted as footman.

Stephen was no where so much in his element, as at the manor; every body paid him particular attention. He had also a singular preference at this time: Alberti being sent forward to Belléfont, he was flattered that his faithful services should be so distinguished as to remain at the manor. St. Clair's domestic gave him no uneasiness; being an Indian of the most tractable and docile nature; so that in all his life, he had never been so happy.

Amongst the variety of excursions without, and amusements within, it did not escape Mrs. Byron's memory, that she had something to say to Sir Theodore on the score of Lord Maldown and her fair daughter; and taking an opportunity, she had scarce opened the subject, before the Baronet interrupted her, first asking her pardon,

don, and then acquainting her with the conversation that had passed between him and his Lordship, and begged her to leave the matter to him; who was as anxious for the propriety of conducting the affair, as if it were Alicia, informing her of his intentions, and not doubting that Lady Maldown would meet their wishes more than half way. The good Lady, less sanguine, and used to disappointment, sighed and smiled: These are heterogeneous sentiments, yet, on certain occasions, very often meet together.

Every day produced new pleasures at Orwell Manor, that is, they varied them with such dexterity, as to give a new face to old ones; and near three weeks had passed before the Baronet remembered he was to be at home in one more. In two months the nuptials were to take place, that was to give Gertrude to her faithful St. Clair; and Sir Theodore wished very much to carry off with him those lovers and Lord Maldown to pass some time with him, previous to the ceremony: Alicia wanted to have Armenia also; but her father represented it as an impropriety; as Lady Maldown was expected at Bellepont, after she had paid her visit to her aunt. How could he bring about what he so much desired? If he indelicately forced the young Lady into her notice, the impression she must have received, in their short intimacy at Bath, was greatly in Armenia's favour, and it would be contradicting the excessive modesty of her character, to place her with themselves and Lord Maldown at such a crisis.

Content with such just reasoning, Miss Mandville gave the invitation to Gertrude alone, and Sir Theodore pressed the gentlemen into his service. Mrs. Byron was applied to; and after excuses,

cuses, apologies, and acknowledgments, her consent was obtained.

Miss Mandville had of late been subject to little inattentions, commonly called absence; and her favourite walk in the evening, instead of the walnut-trees, was up the avenue, and along the dusty road: There is no accounting for the caprices of pretty women: One evening, however, they espied a cloud coming towards them, and soon discovered, in the thick envelope, two cavaliers at full speed, which proved to be, at a nearer view, the recruiting captain, and his dusty squire. As I said before, caprices are not to be accounted for: Miss Mandville, from that moment, till she quitted the Manor, never walked on that very road, so late in favour.

Captain Gordon dismounted, and conducted the ladies back to the house; where, as he had been some time expected, he was most joyfully received, having formed a thousand conjectures from his delay. Mirth and laughter, dance and song, ended this evening; and every room in the house, that was habitable, was occupied. Every morning rose to some new delight: Yet to-morrow they were to separate; and Sir Theodore extended his invitation to George Gordon, who willingly availed himself of this most gratifying request.

Mrs. Byron was very glad to have her second daughter left with her; as she could not, in the constant bustle they were in, attend properly to her: A pensive thoughtful habit seemed to have crept upon her; and her mother concluded she had left the best of her affections behind. Gertrude, Alicia, Lord Maldown, St. Clair, and Captain Gordon, were to proceed on horseback; and Sir Theodore took unto himself the handmaid; though Stephen led a horse, in case his master migh

might choose to ride part of the way. St. Clair had presented Gertrude with a beautiful horse, that formerly had the honour of carrying Lady _____, of whom he had bought it, when a play debt pressed hard upon her.

Thus were they to be marshalled to-morrow morning at ten. Why do those azure eyes portend a shower Armenia? Thy lover will return: But you say, you like not to be left behind;—couldst thou leave him with greater fortitude? I doubt you. Well, to-morrow you shall have the tooth-ach, and not go down to breakfast. And so she had. All were assembled at the hour of nine, except Armenia. Lord Maldown asked for her: Her complaint was notified: He changed colour, and quitting his chair, followed Gertrude, who stood at the window, eyeing her palfrey, which paraded in the court. "Shall I not see Armenia, then?" he said. The voice was low and tremulous,—the cord of sympathy vibrated in the heart of Gertrude.

"Must I not bid her farewell?" continued his Lordship. "It must be through the door, then." whispered the Lady. "Let me but hear her voice!" added he. "She is muffled for the tooth-ach," rejoined she. "I can touch her hand surely," said the lover. "Through a small opening of the door," returned Gertrude. "Cruel! you laugh at me." "No, but I can pity! Will you come and look at my horse, Lord Maldown?" said Gertrude, aloud. He followed her into the hall; they mounted the great stair case; she tapped at the chamber door: "Armenia, if your pain will permit, put forth your hand; my Lord must take leave of your little finger." "Happy lovers have a right to exult, Miss Gordon," said his

his Lordship. “ *I come* in great humility ; if I offend, Armenia, tell me to be gone.”

“ No, indeed, my Lord,—your anxiety does me too much honour ; but this vile tooth-ach—” and her voice swelled and dropped off, so that finishing the sentence was left to the imagination.

“ Cannot I see you,” said his Lordship. “ No, indeed,” rejoined Armenia. “ Give me your hand, then, added he. She put it through, holding the door with the other hand. He raised it to his lips ; and if Gertrude had not exclaimed, Alicia was calling her, and coming up, would not have parted with it easily. Again he pressed it ; then stepping lightly after Gertrude, they passed along the gallery, and down the other stair-case, in a minute ; while Alicia, catching a glimpse of a figure, was going to pursue them, if she had not seen Armenia’s door on the jar ;—entering there, to commiserate her pain, she forgot the fugitives, and on descending, found every body as they should be in the parlour.

They set forward, marshalled as before mentioned, for BellePont. They had not yet learned to part with dry eyes ; and the Baronet embraced Julia as if she was his own, whispering her to throw off that chagrin before they met again, which would be very shortly. Alicia and Julia made quite a tragedy of the parting scene ; so let us close it, and go back to the house, where poor Armenia was also crying with the *tooth-ach*.

Mrs. Byron, very much alarmed for the extraordinary change in Julia, and seeing her give way to a gust of passion, in that moment, could not forbear putting many questions to her, concerning the state of her heart. To all which she answered

answered with her accustomed freedom, declaring to her mother, if such was her case, no other confidant should be her choice.

She said her spirits were hurt by the fear of the robbers; but she did not doubt recovering her serenity by quiet, and her former occupations.

Mrs. Byron had now a great deal to do to put matters in order, after so many visitors; and she set about those regulations, not doubting but Lady Maldown and Lady Sophia would take them in their road to Mrs. Barbara Warton's, their old aunt. Two or three days passed on; Julia got better; and Armenia quite well; when on the fourth evening after the departure of their friends, Mrs. Byron and Julia, who slept together, were disturbed about one o'clock, by a noise resembling the fall of pewter, and Agnes, who slept within, crept from her chamber to her mistress's bedside. Mrs. Byron, raised upon her elbow, gave an attentive ear: The tables below seemed to be in motion, and the chairs rattled. "Save me!" cried Agnes, "do you hear nothing, madam?" Let in Armenia and Annette," said her Lady, starting from the bed. The door opened; by which the chambers communicated, and all her treasures were within her reach. Julia's fears kept her silent. The noise continued; their terrors increased; they put on their clothes, and sat down on the bed. Impelled by desperation, Mrs. Byron proposed listening on the stair head; to which, with much persuasion, they consented. Softly they unlocked the door, and approaching the head of the stairs, they plainly heard, the noise proceeded from what was called the haunted room; and as it still seemed like the rattling of plates, Mrs. Byron was less alarmed, and returned to the chamber. Agnes was on her knees

in

in an instant, praying her mistress to depart the house the next day. The rest were silent as the grave. Again Mrs. Byron went to the stair-head; the noise was the same, neither augmented nor diminished. She was sure some dog had broken the casement, and got into the window. Impressed with this idea, she took the candle, all following her close, with an intention of crossing the hall, to get to the old woman's chamber: It was over the kitchen: And she meant to send her for some neighbour, to break open the door. They reached the hall, and when about half way towards the other side, a more violent noise assailed their ears,—the door of the haunted parlour opened,—and two figures of horrid aspect sallied forth with burning torches; one of whom threw down the torch, seized on Julia, and bore her off. The mother, frantic with horror, pursued them: But he that still held the torch, pushed her so forcibly, that she fell: and cutting her forehead against the step, lay a miserable spectacle, bleeding in torrents, with horror painted in her visage. Agnes fell into fits; and the shrieks of Armenia and Annette, at last, brought the old woman; who, seeing the haunted room door open, fled instantly: But 'twas to call the neighbours. Armenia, strengthened by fear, lifted up her mother, and supporting her between herself and Annette, who was equally assiduous, they kept her in an erect posture,—waiting their fate, with their eyes fixed on the fatal door. The torch, though fallen, still illumined the hall, and shewed the crimson stream that poured from their wounded mother. Armenia took her eye from the door to undo the handkerchief that covered her neck, to bind it round her head; then casting a piteous look at Agnes, who lay writhing in strong convulsions,

tears found their way, and bitter wailings gave some small relief to their oppressed spirits. A noise from the kitchen now again produced fresh terror. Their lips quivered,—their joints grew feeble,—and it was with the utmost difficulty they supported their lifeless mother. The door leading to the kitchen opened, and farmer Owens, his man, maid, and wife, with the old woman, entered. They flew to Madam, and placed her in a chair, her head still supported by Annette; while Armenia now vented exclamation for her lost sister and would take no comfort. The farmer shut and bolted all the doors. Not caring to advance to the haunted room, or waiting to draw conclusions, he made use of the bolt, which was on his side to shut up, all that might remain in this troubled room. Armenia, more than half distracted, wished them to go in pursuit of Julia. She knew not what to do for her mother; and Agnes, wearied by exertion, lay for dead;—she prayed them to do every thing at once. Mrs. Owens thought one thing at a time sufficient. So the men carried madam to her chamber, where she set about bathing and cleaning the wound,—tieing it up in brandy till the Doctor should come.

Annette now desired that Agnes might be brought up; which being done, returning life soon animated her, though wandering and terrified in her ideas. The first dawn of rationality spoke in these words; My dear,—dear mistress! is she then dead?"

She certainly did breathe, by this time, in convulsive sobs; but whether they were the harbingers of death or life, could not be known.

The man went at day-break for the Doctor; and Armenia, who had been on her knees, ever since her mother was in bed, arose to order some

one

one to go to Sir Theodore's, and bring home her sister.

Poor Armenia was blind with weeping ; and when the Doctor came, the story was told by Mrs. Owens, for no one else could speak. He examined the wound, which, though deep, was not dangerous ; but the convulsive catchings, and irregular breathing of his patient, was very alarming. He determined not to leave her for that day, in so precarious a state ; and persuading Agnes to lose a little blood, she found herself so much relieved as to go into every particular of the story, and more than I before knew of it : As *she* saw the blue flame issue from the nostrils of the fiends,—smelt the sulphur,—and had the black mark of a cloven foot, that had trod upon hers, now under her stocking. For her veracity, on every occasion, I will vouch : She saw, or thought she saw, what she said ; and that her foot was bruised, was also true.

Gertrude not being favoured with any prognostic of what had happened at the Manor, was preparing for a private ball, which was to be given by Sir Theodore at Bellepont. The messenger arrived about four o'clock, and a servant informed her of his desire to speak with *Miss* her own self. It was now she felt the omen, and with sad presages descended the stairs. Roger was in the hall, all over dust and heat.

"Are all well at the Manor?" said Gertrude, as soon he came in view. "I don't think they be *Miss*, and please you : for *Miss Ameany* cried so she could hardly speak ; and Dame Owens told me to be gone quick, and vetch you ; and she told me the road, and bid me not stop till I seed you." "Have you no letter," cried Gertrude. "No, to be zure ; if her could not speak, how could her

write?" "Oh misery!" cried Gertrude, and turned round, to fly to Sir Theodore's dressing room. "Wonty come, then?" cried Roger. "Yes, instantly." And she was out of sight.

Stephen crossed the hall, and seeing Roger, immediately shook hands, and asked him to come into the kitchen, to eat and drink. The clown failed not to disclose his errand, with as much as he knew of the story; which had so wonderful an effect on Stephen, that he left him, and planted himself in view of Gertrude's door, in order, if she came forth, to gather some further intelligence from either her looks or words; but he was soon disturbed by Sir Theodore's bell, which rung with great violence. It was not usual with Stephen to answer that bell, as Alberti was the person who attended that summons in ordinary; but the violence with which it was sounded, in the present case, brought Stephen to the dressing-room in a moment.

"Order the carriage, with four horses, instantly," said Sir Theodore; while the agitated Gertrude was still retained by one hand. Stephen made no delay; but flew to the stable. He had seen Miss Gordon's face, which had said enough for him to use dispatch.

"Suffer me to go with you, my dear child," cried Sir Theodore. "Oh, no," replied she; "your carriage, on returning, shall inform you of our situation; and if I find occasion, I will presume on your kindness; but at present your company cannot meet a disappointment: This evening every delight awaits them; and for me what is reserved? St. Clair shall go with me. Where is he at this moment of distress?" Again the bell was rung. "Where is Mr. St. Clair?" said Sir Theodore. "Not returned from fishing," replied the servant.

servant. She cast up her eyes and wrung her hands. Stephen returned; the carriage was ready; and it rattled in the court. "Will you go, thou honest creature?" said Gertrude, looking at Stephen. "To the world's end, Miss, to serve you!" and he looked delighted. She stepped forward; Sir Theodore again detained her, begging leave to accompany her himself; but she pressed on, and jumping into the chariot, Stephen mounted, and they went off at a full gallop.

Alicia, who knew not a single circumstance that had passed, now returned from a walk she had been taking with Lord Maldown and Captain Gordon; and meeting Lucy, enquired if Miss Gordon was dressed? "La, madam," said Lucy, "here has been the most terriblest to do. Miss Gordon is gone, madam; and Sir Theodore is so vexed; he has been asking for you, and you, Sir, and Mr. St. Clair; but no body was to be found—and so—" The tender Alicia was already at the dressing-room door, and the gentlemen followed her; She tapped: Sir Theodore opened it, and said, with more energy than usual, "Where have you been so long, Alicia?" "Dear Sir, forgive me; where is Gertrude?" "Gone home." He then recounted the incoherent discourse of Roger, and what followed.

Alicia blamed herself for her long stay, with many a tear. She had prolonged her walk till she thought Gertrude had dismissed Lucy, who dressed them both.

Captain Gordon said he would soon overtake her; but Sir Theodore recommended patience, as the chariot would return before the company for the evening would break up; and, if necessary, they might all go together.

Alicia declared her inability to entertain any one.

one ; and prayed her father to put them off : But it was not to be done ; Sir Theodore was too well bred to use such freedoms with his intended guests.

A voice below called Cæsar. "Twas St. Clair ; who had been standing up to his knees in water, fishing, and at his return did not choose to pull off his wet boots in an elegant bed room.

Sir Theodore came down, and told him the events of the last hour, as Cæsar was pulling at the boot. Pushing him aside, St. Clair replaced it on the wet leg,—ran to the stable,—threw a saddle on his horse, and mounted ; bad Cæsar follow,—squeezed the Baronet's hand,—gave his horse the spur,—and was out of sight in a minute.

Gertrude was then about six miles on her journey, dressed in every elegance for the ball, going to the house of mourning. She knew it not ; but reasoned, wept, and prayed by turns ; watching the mile stones by the minute hand of her watch ; Stephen advancing every now and then, and looking at her ; sometimes presuming to inquire, How she was now ? She shook her head and sighed.

At the fourteen miles stone the hill was very steep, and the slow progress of a few instants brought St. Clair up with the carriage.

" If I could feel pleasure, you would bring it me," she cried. He got off his foaming steed, which Stephen led ; and not impeding their speed above have a second, placed himself beside Gertrude with the most anxious solicitude. He begged her to call forth that fortitude of mind she so happily possessed ; and let the event be what it would, to receive it as an unavoidable evil, where no self-reproach could give an additional wound : Her life had been devoted to give comfort to her friends ;

friends ; and it was no new task to her, to subdue her own feelings, to promote the satisfaction of others. By these, and such like reasoning, did he endeavour to beguile the interval of uncertainty, and to bring her to a train of reflection, out of that hurry of spirits which disarmed all her nobler faculties.

Cæsar had now come up with the carriage.— His master sent him forward, to have a relay of horses ready ; not caring to push those of the Baronet any farther : he also desired some mulled wine and biscuits to be in readiness ; determined, if possible, to get Gertrude to taste something ; lest grief should prey upon her, and render her unfit for what might happen. A sort of stupidity hung upon her, and she appeared not to attend to half he said. The horses were changed, and she took the wine, endeavouring, as far as she was able, to adopt a false courage.

Between eight and nine they came in sight of Orwell Manor. As they turned off to the avenue, Stephen set forward. Agnes, who had watched at the window till her sight was dim made a sign to Armenia, who sat on her mother's bed weeping, and slid down stairs. She opened the hall door ; Stephen started back ; his mouth opened by an involuntary drop of the lower jaw ; and his eyes gave a convulsive roll. St. Clair had lifted out Gertrude, who, falling on the neck of Agnes cried out, " My mother ! my mother !" " She will soon be better," sobbed the poor girl. " But Miss Julia is——dead !" said Gertrude, and falling on her knees, she raised her hands to prayer ; then tearing her lovely locks, in wild distraction, dashed the dishevelled fragments in the air. St. Clair raised her up, took her hands in his, laid her head against his breast while

while Agnes cried over and over again, " Not dead ! no, indeed, not dead ! " " Say it all, good Agnes," said St. Clair " This suspence is the worst torture you can give." " Oh dear Sir," rejoined Agnes, " last night, Sir, a spirit,—a terrible spirit, Sir,—broke out of the haunted room, Sir, and took up my sweet young lady. Oh dear, my heart will break ! And carried her off, Sir, we don't know where ; cut open my mistress's forehead ; and left me all black and blue, Sir, as you see, upon the ground, quite dead." Gathering breath, she then added : " My Lady is better Miss Gordon. The Doctor has been with her all day ; and poured something down her throat, that has made her quiet ; but he charges us not to disturb her : He is taking a little sleep himself on the parlour couch.

Gertrude raised her pale face, and endeavoured to go into the house. St. Clair entreated her not to go near her mother, till she was more composed, but suffer him to conduct her into the parlour, to try if any thing more like reason could be had from the doctor, concerning this hobgoblin story. He besought her to sustain her mind ; called her his wife—his only love ; and by tenderness and persuasion got her into the parlour.—Agnes followed. " Where is Armenia ? where is Annette ? oh Julia ! oh my mother !" " Miss Armenia will not quit her mother madam."

Agnes disappeared, and in an instant Annette burst into the parlour,—flung herself upon her sister, and mingled sob with sob.

The Doctor, roused by the noise, started up ; and seeing St. Clair's odd figure, in his fishing dress, with Gertrude in such pompous array, her hair dragged all over her face and neck, thought upon the story of the haunted room, and was making

making the best of his way, *sans compliment* from the parlour, but St. Clair detained him, and convinced him he was no image of fancy.

The intelligence he got from him, was as ridiculous as the recital of Agnes; and who to apply to next, was the consideration. The Doctor spoke of Farmer Owens, whose wife was still in the house.

"I shall look at my patient, and send her to you," said the Doctor. "Let me go with you to my mother," cried Gertrude. "Well, madam, if you will be composed, and not speak to her, you shall go; but remember her life depends on quiet."

The Doctor was obliged to sit down for five minutes, till another gust subsided; which his words had occasioned. St. Clair did not wait for propriety in this instance; but tearing off his boots, which, from being so long wet, adhered to his legs, he supported his beloved quite to the chamber door; while Annette still clung round one of her arms. It was left open by the Doctor's orders. Gertrude left her sandals on the threshold. The ground she trod was hallowed to her. A more melancholy scene was never beheld. St. Clair saw it from the door.

Armenia sat on the foot of the bed, pale and weeping; Agnes, with swoln eyes and discoloured cheeks, on the window seat; Mrs. Owens, in an easy chair, with anxious face; and, lastly, Mrs. Byron, so altered, (the features still retaining the cast of terror) stretched in her bed with scarce a sign of life: The big drops, fell from the eye of him, who had fearless faced a cannon.

Gertrude advanced with hands upraised; then sinking on her knees, beside her mother, made

up the spectacle of woe. St. Clair had seen too much ; he withdrew, with a sick heart, and went to seek the farmer ; while poor Stephen was endeavouring to accommodate his hair, which stood erect at hearing the old woman's history of the last night's horrors.

C H A P. XX.

THE carriage was still waiting ; St. Clair took up a pen, and gave the most brief account of what he had gathered concerning the misfortune, requesting Sir Theodore's advice ; sent off this hasty letter, knowing how anxious their friends would be for the return of the carriage, and proceeded to the farmer's. Owens gave exactly the same vague account as the others. St. Clair lost all patience ; returned to the manor ; and it being now dark, took a candle from the kitchen, and went to the haunted parlour ; seeing a bolt, he undid that ; and expecting the resistance of a lock, he applied his shoulder to the door, with some force, which, giving way, as soon as he touched it, he fell in at full length, and the candle was extinguished.

Now, reader, you may imagine the ghost was very much offended at so abrupt a visit, and certainly flew away with the assailant, a stack of chimneys, and the gable end of the house ; but you are

are mistaken : St. Clair's first idea was, that some villain had a secret entrance to this parlour, for the purpose of terrifying the inhabitants of the house into his good pleasure. Finding himself prostrate in the dark, he endeavoured to regain his feet ; but something greasy lay on the floor, that made it slippery, and he stumbled over a basket of bottles, which broke with some crash.—The noise reached the ear of Stephen, who was still in the kitchen, repeating the story of the ghost to Cæsar, who had been doing up his horses, while the old woman held forth her oration.

St. Clair had passed them not two minutes before ; and as he must go through the hall, to get into any of the rooms, Stephen was certain the fiend had attacked him : “ Cæsar, your master has met it, let us go and help him,” cried he, (for notwithstanding his dread of supernatural appearances, he could not bear to stand idle, when his friends were in danger.

Cæsar caught the spit, and Stephen the beef-fork, commonly called the tormentor ; and with the candle, and the old woman, they got into the hall ; when seeing that tremendous door open, and a purple tide flowing fast over the pavement, they concluded all was over ; and when St. Clair, (who, by the reflection of their candle, found his way out of the entrenchments) appeared, Stephen flung the fork, with all his force, at him ; concluding it was the fiend coming to seize upon them. It fortunately missed its aim, and stuck in the door. At that moment Stephen discovered his mistake,—fell on his knees,—and desired St. Clair to kill him directly, for he was not worthy to live.

The

The noise brought down the Doctor, who, in an angry tone, demanded the cause of it. St. Clair begged him to enter the haunted parlour with him, to prove the fallacy of the story so often repeated; and, taking the candle, walked first; the Doctor, not contending for the post of honour. A large writing desk stood in the middle of the room, covered with papers placed so, that you might pass on each side. Some cold ham lay upon it, and some on the floor. A basket of claret lay, demolished by St. Clair; and some ends of wax candles, and a tinder box, was also on the desk, and the casement open.

Every spectator was convinced, it must be supposed, that this appearance of *bonne chere*, was not prepared for a mere shadow; neither was it necessary the casement should be opened, to receive an ærial being: That some substantial villainy had been practised, to entrap this dear lost girl, was now evident; and St. Clair determined not to sleep till some more lights should give a clue to a pursuit.

The Doctor returned to the sick room; St. Clair went up to the village; and Stephen bolted the door of the haunted room, and returned to the kitchen.

The composing draughts that had been forced upon the patient, had so far taken effect, as to quell the agitation that at first appeared so dangerous. She had opened her eyes, but they were fixed; no object interested her; Gertrude took her hand, and kissing it, sought to awaken those maternal feelings of late so animated; but found her unmoved; her eyes still retaining their fixed position.

Shocked at this portent of loss of reason, Gertrude let loose the anguish of her heart, in loud bewailings;

bewailings : But though the dread of alarming the oppressed spirits of her mother, soon silenced her, torpid nature, nor saw, nor heard of pleasure or of pain.

Gertrude had prevailed on Armenia, and all but Mrs. Owens, to lie down. Midnight arrived ; the Doctor had taken up a bed near at hand ; and the unhappy Gertrude, leaned her head against the post, at the feet of her mother, when, casting a look towards the door, which was left open for air, she saw St. Clair. Recommending Mrs. Owens not to take her eyes from her patient, she stepped to the passage, and was informed by him, that he had spent above an hour and a half in the village, and had seen every body who was not gone to bed, in order to gather information of the transactions of the night before ; that he had learned from one fellow, who had been early up, to get ready for market, that the noise of a carriage going at a violent rate, brought him out of his stable, about two o'clock ; that it was very dark, but he plainly saw there were four horses, and two out-riders ; but as he concluded they were only travellers, he thought no more about them : The horses heads were turned towards S_____. From another he had learned, that an odd *play dress*, as he termed it, was picked up, by a man that worked on the roads, early in the morning ; and if the man was not gone to bed, he would fetch it to his honour : This he did : And St. Clair had brought it home with him.— “ I now wish,” added St. Clair, “ to advise with you, if you are able to hear me : Shall I go to S____ ? Shall I send Stephen the other way, and Cæsar to—— to get what intelligence can be procured. As to overtaking the villains, it is impossible ;

sible ; but we may have some indication of their route, and follow them.

" Oh St. Clair !" cried the heart-broken Gertrude, " there is such an anarchy within, I cannot think ; take your own counsel ; that must be right ; my senses are bewildered ; nature drags me every way to torture ! My wretched mother, —lost sister !"

Her sobs and sighs almost suffocated her ; and he was forced to support her on his bosom for some minutes, before she could recover.

" I will go then," said he : " But I will leave Stephen to take care of you. I can find emissaries enough when I get to — : And do not fear, my love ; I will be with you to-morrow night ; and you shall hear from me also, before I return."

Gertrude gave a silent assent to his determination, and returned to her sad office.

St. Clair's foot was still on the threshold ; his eye waited on her, till the chryſtal drop swelled to its boundaries, and suffering it to fall, as the just tribute to humanity, he retired. Seating himself for a few minutes in the parlour, he settled his plan,—took a tumbler of water from the side board,—and then went to the kitchen, where he found Stephen, within the large chimney, sleeping on one of the seats, and Cæſar on the other. He awakened them both ; and telling Stephen his intentions, bid him remain to protect the ladies ;—and taking Cæſar to the stable, he assisted in the faddling the horses and immediately set out.

Stephen felt the consequence of his office and, mounting the grand stair-case, fixed himself as sentinel, on the top of it. Little passed during this dismal night, that could throw one gleam of comfort

comfort into it. After the departure of St. Clair, a sort of horrid silence reigned, except when the broken sigh disturbed the calm.

Armenia and her younger sister, wearied with crying, had sunk into sleep; Agnes, full of youth and blood, needed no lullaby; Mrs. Owens, fatigued with the last night's exertion, slumbered in the chair; and Stephen, seated on the mat, forgot himself.—And is there no repose for thee, thou gentlest fair? Is every care layed on thy bosom? Is thy dear eye to know no respite; but strain those lovely balls with watching misery? Guard her, ye blest invisibles, and support her through this dark,—this gloomy interval.

At four o'clock the doctor came in, to repeat his medicine. The lids had fallen over the senseless orbs of his patient, and slumber appeared again to have taken its dominion. The operation of getting down the potion, was terrible to Gertrude: A struggle of suffocation being unavoidable; and the appearance of using force to her she had so long revered, added to her uneasiness.

At six all her companions joined her,—none courting the pillow after nature was sufficed. In tears they parted, and with tears they met; and truly waked only to weep.

Armenia now recollect ed, that her sister had taken no refreshment since her arrival, whispered Agnes to prepare some tea, and solicited her to partake of it. Indeed this was the first time, since their distress, that nature had warned them she must be supplied. Armenia kissed the wan cheek of her mother; but, deaf to every call of love or duty, she lay a living monument of death.

About noon, Sir Theodore, Alicia, Lord Maldwyn, and Captain Gordon arrived: Neither of these had tasted the sweets of repose, for the carriage

riage returned just as the party broke up; and St. Clair's letter being delivered to Sir Theodore, they adjourned to the library, to peruse the contents, which was no sooner communicated, than a general confusion took place.

The Baronet sent for horses to the inn; Alicia threw part of her cloaths off, and put on a great coat over the rest; Lord Maldown and George Gordon were in his Lordship's phæton in ten minutes; and the hired horses being put to the dusty chariot, they set off as fast as they could, without any sort of order.

When Gertrude had left BellePont she had on a crape dress, embroidered round the bottom and sides by her own lovely hands; pearls and feathers adorned her head; these she had given to the winds in her first terrors, but her body was still enveloped, as before, save here and there a rent, and stained by the scattering of the medicine. Her hair washed from the powder, by her tears, like mournful cypress, hung upon her shoulders, and her expressive face spoke all her woe.

Stephen, though relieved from standing sentinel, was nevertheless occupied very much. He felt a consequence within himself, from the great charge confided to him by St. Clair; and as he now and then got a word from Agnes, as she went up and down, and had ventured to pass the chamber door himself once, with a fide glance. He needed not much information to understand how ill every thing went on. Rejoiced then to hear the carriage, which he judged to be his master's, he stepped forward, and opened the door. The good company hastened into the parlour; and all crowding about Stephen, (seeing no one else) they interrogated him so rapidly, that he did not know how to begin an answer; but bowing to Sir Theodore, he commenced his oration:

"Please

"Please your honour, my honoured master, things are in a more dreadful plight than we had any forewarning of. Madam Byron; aye, the worthy lady, she is not long (here Stephen wiped his eye;) and as for Miss July, to be certain, she *must* be dead and buried; for though Mr. St. Clair says, he is certain it were people, and took me into yon wicked parlour, to convince me; Agnes knows what she saw and smelt too; your honour and she has the marks to prove."

"But where is Mr. St. Clair?" interrupted the Baronet.

"Gone in pursuit, your honour, and left me to take care of the family (and he grew an inch on the word.) I stood sentinel at Madam's door all night; and I goes my rounds every quarter of an hour all day, your Honour."

"Excellent fellow!" cried the Baronet, in the warmth of his heart.

Miss Mandville's impatience knew no bounds; yet terrified at she knew not what, she asked Stephen if he would go with her to the chamber. George Gordon would accompany her to see his aunt, and Sir Theodore desired her to send word if he might be admitted.

Stephen proceeded to the stair, than turning to Mr. Gordon: "You will please to pull off your shoes, Sir." And poor Alicia kicked her behind her; but when she reached the chamber door, she was absolutely afraid to go in. Agnes, hearing a rustling, came out, and throwing the door quite open, Alicia saw her friends situated just as I described. Her heart died within her, and she turned round, ran down stairs, and fainted in her father's arms, where she must remain for the present, as a violent rattling in Mrs. Byron's throat, denoted speedy dissolution.

Her

Her daughters, in spite of the Doctor and Mrs. Owens, raised her instantly up in the bed, and supported her. After some struggles, she threw up a quantity of coagulated blood; and the violence of the effort gave a perspiration at every pore. With what delight did Gertrude perceive her eye, that so long had ceased to speak, turn up to heaven, and then fall on her. Armenia shrieked out, "My dear mother will live!" When the Baronet and Captain Gordon entered the room, (they had left Lord Maldown to take care of Alicia, who was getting better,) and determined to know the worst, had ventured without leave into the sick chamber. No body took any notice of them; they stood contemplating the scenes. The figures were so singularly affecting, that years cannot efface it from the memory: And it was not till the Doctor perceived and spoke to the gentlemen, that any one knew they were in the chamber.

Mrs. Byron seemed wonderfully relieved by this action of nature; and motioning for a reclining posture, they laid her down, and she fell in a sleep, that portended every thing they wished.

Not a word was spoken: Sir Theodore kissed the hands of his young friends, and retired; and was soon followed by Mr. Gordon. Alicia, angry with herself, for want of fortitude, would return to the chamber; but Sir Theodore begged her to resist her inclinations till intimation came, that Mrs. Byron was awake: For he was certain she would break forth into some violence, from the affection she bore to every part of the family.

Lord Maldown was in the most uncomfortable situation imaginable: He was dying to get a sight of his beloved, who he knew must have suffered terribly; and yet could find no plausible excuse for

for his being there. If he could have been useful, he should have been happy; but there were so many before him, who had prior claims to do them service, that he thought himself an intruder, and felt as if he ought to be gone, yet could not go.

Captain Gordon went to the public house, and ordered the best arrangement he could for provision and beds: The party having determined not to leave Orwell Manor till some happy event should brighten the scene.

Cæsar now rode up to the house, with a letter for Gertrude, which St. Clair had dispatched, in order to beguile her sorrowful moments; for though he had traced the carriage through every turnpike, yet there are so many carriages under the same description, of four horses and two out riders, that no dependance could rest upon this information. He mentioned the circumstance of the disguise, but this also was vague. It was not to be supposed such a dress would be worn, after they had quitted the Manor. As to the Lady he described, or any Lady, he could gather nothing satisfactory. Between two and three in the morning, such a carriage had gone through S— turnpike, and had not returned that way; but he could not learn that it had stopped at any of the inns in the town. Cæsar was sent off, however, with this letter, where a postscript added, he was just going on the pier, to inquire amongst the shipping, and should search every vessel; that if any objected to such a visitation, he should apply to those who could authorise the proceeding.

Gertrude having perused this epistle, sent it down to the Baronet, who, after giving it due consideration, thought it was better to wait for

St.

St Clair's return ; before he took any measures towards making the matter a public inquiry.

Gertrude had recollect ed herself very much during the composed sleep of her mother ; and found, by Agnes, her friends below had been entirely neglected, and left to their own disposal. She begged Armenia to go to them ; to welcome Alicia ; and endeavour to accommodate them with some refreshment.

This young Lady was ignorant of Lord Maldow n's making an addition to the party below ; or she might have recollect ed, that her person was entirely neglected ; and that swoln eyes and wan cheeks are not the materials Cupid makes use of to subdue lovers. I say, she might have recollect ed it : But I do her wrong : No instance had proved since the fatal night, that she could, or would, bestow one thought upon herself, till some happier hour shed its influence over her family.

She went down, and endeavoured to be composed as she embraced Miss Mandville ; but finding one of her hands pressed from another quarter ; she looked round ; and those blushes that before seemed to have been killed with grief, rushed to their native seat, and tears, from various causes, fell in abundance.

They placed her amongst them, and she endeavoured to acquit herself, in paying the rights of hospitality ; but they led to other subjects, and she repeated, as well as she was able, from her emotions, the events that had caused, and were still likely to cause, so much misery.

When she named the forcing away of her sister, and the fall of her mother, Lord Maldow n started up, and, taking her hand, exclaimed, " Oh thou sweetest suffering angel ! where was—"

Then

Then seating himself, all crimson, shook as if stricken with an ague fit.

Armenia wished not to prolong her stay below; but repeating her solicitations, George Gordon informed her of their plan; and she withdrew to her mother's apartment, where, in a few moments, Mrs. Byron awoke. She cast her eyes from one to another, then round the room. Gertrude knew what they sought, but stifling her own feelings, she fondly embraced her, and asked if she was better. The Doctor approached, and telling her she would soon be well, she spoke one word, and that was Julia.

No answer was made; and every eye sunk downwards; tears were now what they all wished to see, and they fell in copious showers: the cap, the pillow, and the sheets were steeped, and the sluices of sorrow yet supplied the torrents.

They informed her all her friends were below, asked her to see them, and used every effort to remove thoughts from the subject that it dwelt on; but some time it was in vain; at length, growing more composed, she pulled her daughter close to her: "Tell me, I conjure you, the fate of your sister?"

"Suffer me to call up Sir Theodore, my dearest mother," replied Gertrude, "his better judgment will guide every information, so as to soften what my hurried spirits could only magnify."

Armenia went to summons the Baronet; who most willingly undertook to exert his efforts, to make Mrs. Byron hear with reason what she sought to know. His fair friend conducted him up stairs, and placing a chair by the bedside, they all retired to the windows.

Sir

Sir Theodore, though not quite punctual at the external forms of religion, was a well read and well practised Christian : He had himself, in the moments of sorrow, tasted those resources which are denied to none who seek them with sincerity ; and he opened his discourse, by bringing to view those sentiments of piety, he was certain, Mrs. Byron possessed, though at present they were absorbed, from the great shock her intellects had received. He fell with the smoothest gradations into the severity of the trials she had to support, and representing the invaluable of her life to her children, proved the necessity of her not sacrificing to one, what was claimed by the whole. He next taught her to hope, from the exertion of her friends, that Julia would soon be restored ; and mentioned what St. Clair had already done, to that purpose, concluding with assurances that neither expence or trouble should be spared to find the darling of all that knew her.

Sir Theodore withdrew, and every means that could be thought of was tried to soften her sorrows. Alicia insisted on supplying Gertrude's place, and begged her fair friend to take some repose ; but she could not think of seeking what she was certain would fly her, if St. Clair did not return with better accounts of success of his researches.

That gentleman arrived about three in the morning. Worn out with fatigue, he had taken a chaise, his horse being quite knocked up. But, alas ! after searching every vessel, no tidings could be obtained that were worth crediting. He had sent scouts along the coast, and offered valuable rewards to any one who could disclose the smallest circumstances relative to the business.—

As he now became anxious for what was doing
at

at the Manor, and wanted to consult with Sir Theodore, he had set out at a late hour, that no time might be lost, even in sleep.

Sir Theodore had gone up the village, a little after midnight, concluding St. Clair would not return, at that late season; so he was obliged, in spite of himself, to rest a few hours. After communicating the foregoing to his beloved, he threw himself, at his length, on the couch, in the parlour,—and wearied nature sunk to that repose she had been so long deprived of.

About six o'clock the sun shone so strong thro' the casement, that St. Clair, whose imagination run on in the pursuit which had employed every faculty, dreamt the phantoms, with the lighted torches, stood before him. Starting up, he seized Sir Theodore's great coat, which hung over the screen, and dragging it to his feet, he perceived he was just awake, and it was broad day-light. It was apparently later, from the brightness of the sun, than his watch indicated; he therefore set forward to the village; and inquiring of the maid of the inn, where Sir Theodore slept, he took the liberty of rousing the Baronet, who instantly got up.

After relating to him what has already been recounted, Stephen was called, and sent to the post town, to provide an express, which was to set out for London, on the instant, with letters, which the Baronet had written over night, in case they should be found necessary at St. Clair's return. These letters were to certain magistrates; also one to Lord Orwell, who being on the spot, Sir Theodore begged would superintend into the business,—that not a moment might be lost, in circulating inquiries throughout every part of the kingdom.

C H A P. XXI.

AND now, reader, you will not be displeased, if I tell you, Mrs. Byron was so far recovered as to sit up in her bed, where she prayed and wept by turns ; that Alicia had prevailed on Gertrude, to lay down upon a mattress, brought into the room for that purpose ; and Agnes relieved Mrs. Owens, who was growing very heavy ; that nine in the morning had struck, and that it is high time to begin our pursuit after the lost Julia.

This most lovely of her sex no sooner felt the clutches of the fiend, but affrighted sense fled from the mansion of peace : Former alarms had weakened the system, and this last shock summed up the whole. Before they placed her in the chaise all motion had fled ; and during the journey, one fainting fit so quickly succeeded another, that little dread of a discovery, from her outcries, were to be feared. Her companion did not take much pains to make her sensible for the present ; contenting himself with supporting her from falling to the bottom of the chaise. He had thrown his diabolical habit under his feet ; and his man, in the eagerness of the flight, did not perceive his hat slipped from the straps, where it had been but slightly buckled, and was left behind in the road.

They soon arrived at S—— ; and turning to the beach, drove along the strand, towards a cove, where a bark lay at anchor, of about fifty tons burthen.

burthen. The boat put to shore; the lady was carried into it, and in a few minutes reached the bark.

She was conveyed to the cabin, where a bed, with chintz furniture, received her; and a woman, of no bad aspect, begun the usual methods of restoring her to life: Cordials were conveyed through her lips with a tea-spoon; and after numberless applications she revived; and casting her eyes round her, imagined she had passed the bounds of life. The cabin was panelled with looking-glass: A small cut lustre, with wax lights, illumined it: A narrow sofa lined the sides, with chintz covers, to match the bed; and perfumed bags lay in every corner: A small Persian carpet fitted the floor, whose flowers seemed to vie with the beauty of the chintz; and the soft undulating motion of the water, as it played round the bark, contributed to the deception.

I said she opened her eyes,—she again closed them. When recollecting the horror which had suspended her senses, she started wildly up, and cried, where am I? Her companion, approaching with submission, answered “In perfect safety, madam; pray compose yourself.” “Where are my mother and my sisters? This is not Orwell Manor. I will begone.” And she sprung from the bed, making to the stairs; but what was her surprise, when she saw on the top of them, the detested Charles Wentworth.

“Monster,” she cried, “is it you? Let me go, or the vengeance of my injured family will pursue you.”

Stung with the salutation, and the threat, he rejoined, “Madam, as you are now in my power, and no pursuit can counteract the safety of my plan, long considered, I advise you to recon-

cile yourself to the accommodations I have purposely provided: And being in the claws of a *monster*, don't you force him to forget he is a man."

Julia raised herself upon the steps; and the sail and mast being full in her view, she burst into an agony of grief, and went back to the cabin. Now fully convinced she was on the sea, and should never more see her beloved friends, she fell on her knees to the woman: "If one spark of compassion," said she, "remain with you! Oh pity such a wretch as me! Think of a mother and sisters, killed with anguish! Restore me,—save me,—intercede for me! What have I done? Why am I dragged from my relations? Why put on board this vessel? Oh mistress, my heart will burst!—Pity! pity! pity!" Here her length measured the floor, and another fit saved her some time from the knowledge of her misery.

Wentworth came down; and softened by her situation, lent his aid to restore her; when she came to, he begged her forgiveness,—swore his whole fortune was devoted to her service,—and proclaimed his honourable intentions; offering, if she would marry him, to restore her as soon as the ceremony was passed.

Happy to hear, at least, that time might be gained, she desired him to leave her, and affecting to sleep, she was revolving in her own mind the means of escape: Not doubting but he would push for the continent, the carriage being taken to pieces, and the horses shipped. They soon reached the open sea; and the quick motion of so small a vessel, rendered the situation of Julia even more deplorable than before. The sickness deprived her now of the affection of tranquillity, and as it is, of all others, the most desponding

desponding complaint, she thought all her former ills irremediable, and prayed for death with fervency.

The woman, though much incommoded herself, sought to alleviate her sufferings, offering her every nourishment that could tempt the taste; but for two days she lived upon cold water; and when they were close in to the desired port, Julia, from various agitations, discovered every symptom of a violent fever.

Wentworth, who had visited her several times in the course of the voyage, and thought the illness would subside, when they came into calm water, now grew seriously alarmed; he carried her upon deck, where she saw a rocky barren coast, with no human dwelling in view, but an old castle, that seemed formerly to have been built to scare the privateers: It had one large turret, and a sort of long cloister, lined with apartments on the inside wall, but open on the outside to what had been a garden, with a well in the middle of it.

Gathering strength from the air, Julia asked Mr. Wentworth what was to become of her? and if nothing but her death would satisfy him? If you persist in detaining me from my friends, that will soon gratify you.—Then turning to three sailors, that manned the vessel: "Gentlemen," she cried, "if you have daughters or sisters, feel for me,—set me free! Riches and honour will await you,—my friends will give you all you ask: More you cannot obtain, from one who bribes you to fulfil your whole lives, by an iniquitous action."

Wentworth grew angry, gripped her hand, and ordered the boat out. She struggled for her liberty, and her disordered head grew giddy with

the effort. The woman received it on her bosom with much tenderness, and the sailors turned round to avoid the fight.

She was lifted into the boat, and a few minutes brought them to land. She walked slowly on, between Wentworth and the female, who kept close to her on each side, as if they feared her escaping. They passed through an old stone portal, into the garden, and entered the cloister, where the servant with all his force, pushed open an heavy door, that shewed a damp stone hall, with a turf fire blazing at one end of it.

An old woman, without shoes, stockings, or stays, accosted them in a language unknown to our fair friend, but was answered in the same by the servant.

Overcome with horror, Julia grew light headed, and vented a rhapsody of incoherences of witches, demons, and giants; bid them take off her chains, wash her in the Hellespont, and lay her on a bed of ice; then laughed, and stared at Wentworth, calling him,—Foul fiend!—foul fiend!

Terrified more and more, he tried to take her hand, but she shrieked so dreadfully, when he came near her, that he was obliged to retire; and her attendant, who was acquainted with the castle, conveyed her to a bed room in the turret. Soon overcome by her own volubility, she seated herself on the side of the bed, and her vacant eye wandered round the apartment unconscious (which, with the furniture of the the room, were not of a piece with the mansion; having been fitted up with great taste very lately.) "Tis true the window was barred with iron, and the walls thick and uneven, but they were covered by a handsome paper, and every defect attended to with minuteness,

ness, as far as the make of the room would allow of.

I am now under the necessity of losing six weeks, the time my heroine lay in the utmost danger. I never could learn how she escaped the jaws of death, but suppose it might be from having no Doctor; nature, and the two women doing all they could for her; but in the seventh week she was seen, a perfect spirit, airing in the garden, supported by the women.

It is scarcely to be believed, a plan should be so compleatly arranged and executed, by a man of the moderate share of intellects possessed by Charles Wentworth. He certainly was much indebted to his valet, who, having lived some years with a noble Duke, had become a perfect machiaval in every art necessary to seduction.

From the time of the masquerade he had begun his operations, to put in practice a scheme that could not be circumvented. He quitted London, and sailed for Ireland, the native country of his confidant and counsellor. Leaving the high road to those who needed not concealment, they travelled down the western parts, along the coast, and saw many places where civilized man did not choose to put a foot. The wild people accosted them frequently; but M'Dermot (for that was the name this prime agent bore) answering them in his mother tongue, set all right; and a few thirteeners would have risen a regiment of volunteers for any kind of villany: So true it is, this nation knows no medium: The uncultivated minds shewing a depravity of nature unequalled,—and the enlightened, proving liberality, generosity, and brotherly love their attributes.

They had so far lost themselves by the irregular breaks in the coast, as to have travelled fifteen miles,

miles, without even seeing a hut. At length the turret of this formidable castle reared its head; giving protection to a bay, very well designed by nature for the reception of shipping; but as no article of commerce was within several days' journey of it, the utility of this opening was of small account, affording only temptation to an enemy to land; and several privateers had actually availed themselves of it, and marched up the country, near twenty miles, to drive off cattle and other live stock, to victual their vessels. Peace being restored, the castle was deserted, and only an invalid and his wife, left to preserve it in some condition.

Let us not derogate from the antiquity of this building, reader; it had stood the shock of time, under many succession of Monks, and with a few alterations and additions, became the fortress now in question.

These adventurers were struck with the appearance of the bay: It seemed as if enchantment had conjured up the very place they were in quest of; and advancing to the portal, they begged refreshment for themselves, and rest for their horses, of the same amiable personage you have been presented to, on our conducting Julia to the hall.

She supplied them with what she had, viz. dried fish and potatoes. And her husband coming in, a conversation soon took place, that proved to M'Dermot, gold would do any thing with this worthy couple. He interpreted to his master the pliability of their sentiments; who was charmed to find his affairs go on in so fine a train—of wickedness.

He examined every apartment in the building; some of which, indeed, were very gloomy; devices still remaining of Roman Catholic prejudice, and Memento

Memento Moris, cut in marble niches, stood mocking at time.

The old man told him of subterraneans which might suit him on occasion. None of the party, however, seemed curious, in regard to these sequestered abodes. And those regions of horror remained undisturbed by the unhallowed foot of Mr. Wentworth. He fixed on the rooms that seemed most habitable; consisting of an eating parlour at the end of the hall, and four bed chambers, which he informed his host, he should fit up to his own taste, and bid him remain in daily expectation of his return. He placed ten guineas in the old Lady's hand, as earnest of future favours, and set off directly for Y—.

The next business was, the purchase of the bark, which took some time to accommodate for his purpose. M'Dermot announcing his master's passion for fishing, it was considered as a boat for that amusement; and the elegant cabin was also supposed to be for ladies, who are fond of those amusements.

As soon as she was ready, M'Dermot searched out three steady mariners, and they sailed away to C—. There every article of furniture for the castle was quickly procured, with fine wines, sweet meats, pickles, flour and salt, hams, tongues, Dutch beef; in short, every thing that would keep, with fowls, sheep, and pigs, alive. Thus freighted, they set sail, and soon arrived in the bay, discharged their lading, and stored it, and set about fitting up the castle in a new style.

It struck upon the mind of the ingenious Mr. Wentworth, that a woman would be necessary of some degree of superiority to the old one, who arrived at the castle, to attend upon the devoted virgin; and naming his wishes to M'Dermot, he
bid

bid him take no thought for that, for as soon as he had finished papering the chamber, he would tell him a bit of his mind.

This fellow had a sister, that attended the nuns in the convent, at G——; and her friends, desirous to have one saint in the family, to make up for the sins of the rest, were collecting a sum, to establish her there for life. This the girl held in abhorrence; and her brother knew a hint from him would give a sanction to her mind for running away.

He instantly took pen and paper, inclosing a five guinea note, bidding her repair without loss of time to L——, where she would meet a bark, (describing the vessel), ready to convey her to him who had much good in view for her.

He dispatched the boat with this letter, to put in the post, taking care she should never go twice to the same port, lest the men might chatter. From thence she proceeded to L——, and the next evening the identical young woman came on board, and set sail for the bay.

She arrived in the morning; where, being met by her brother she was conducted to one of those gloomy apartments before mentioned, and such oaths administered to her, without mental or verbal reservation, as bound her to do whatever he should order her.

He saw her terror at the appearance of surrounding objects; he caressed her, and enlivened her with a glass of wine; so that she soon became fitted to receive his instructions.

It was not very long before they had finished the new scenes and decorations, preparatory to the tragedy to be performed at the castle, and the impatient lover embarked once more in his yacht, for London. There, hid in one of its remotest corners,

corners, he set spies upon the actions of Sir Theodore's family; and had the precaution to write to Lord Orwell, and send it under cover to La Buisiere, at Chantilly, with orders to forward it to England.

This threw all suspicion at a distance, that might otherwise have fallen upon him, if known to be in Britain.

Failing in his first and second attempts to perpetrate this villainous design, he set off for Lord Orwell's steward's, about fifty miles from the Manor; and forming a plausible story to the good man, begged the key of that room which contained the family papers, promising to return it as soon as he had assort'd those his Lordship wanted. Mr. Stephens delivered it; and Mr. Wentworth failed not to return it to him, in a blank cover, as soon as it had answered the purpose for which he had borrowed it.

Finding from his emissaries, that the moment for success now offered itself, he set forward in his chaise and four, attended by M'Dermot and one of his boatmen, on horseback,—the boat having been previously stationed, off and on, about S—, there to wait his further orders.

They stopped in a wood, three miles short of the house, till eleven at night, then proceeding as quietly as possible. The carriage turned into the avenue, and Wentworth and M'Dermot alighted, leaving orders with the man, if they did not come back before day-light, to retire to the woods, till the same hour the following night, and then remain in the avenue, waiting as before.

They carried their implements and provisions themselves, not knowing if the first essay might prove unsuccessful. Removing the lead off the casement, they soon gained admission to the desir-

ed spot; there equipping themselves in their habits of disguise, they eat and drank the interval away. Some time after midnight, their operations began; and the success that awaited it is already known.

C H A P. XXII.

I Think I left my lovely friend in a convalescent state. As I once thought her like La Vierge, now methinks 'tis Mary Magdalen: The wan cheek, unpraised hands, and tearful eyes, speak penitence and sorrow, though for the former it was needless,—sainted purity was not more blameless. Weakened by her disorder, without hope of delivery, tears were her comforters,—and the only tribute she could pay her friends.

The hated Wentworth was ever before her; now imploring,—now commanding,—now threatening; always teasing, and always rejected; sometimes he drowned his cares in the bottle: But, fortunately, the power of wine, instead of exhilarating, only stupified the passions, and sleep with the head-ach, were the result of such debauchery. He soon found that his impetuosity increased Julia's tiebility, and Dorcas besought him to leave her to herself, till health and strength returned. Wearied with solitude, he took her council, and leaving a strict guard over his prisoner, he went for

for three weeks to L——k, under the appellation of Mr. Harcourt.

Billiards, hazard, and the card table, helped to dissipate his gloom, and brought him acquainted with a numerous set of riotous young men; and he found this change of scene a great relief, not that he loved the less, but that he thought the less.

During this absence, Julia made use of every argument to work on the mind of her guards: Prayers, offers of reward, pious exhortations, were severally essayed; but they were proof to even more than those,—complaints and tears.

Dorcas shewed sympathy for all her woes; but she was bound by oaths so firm, she dared not help her; and the terrors her brother thundered in her ears, of priests and penance, put a period to the hopes of Julia from that quarter. She could not avoid, in the midst of her misfortunes, finding some consolation from the behaviour of this young woman, whose modest demeanour spoke a favourable omen to the delicate mind of our heroine. She drew a conclusion, that no brutality was suggested against her by Wentworth; or he would have placed those about her more fitted for the purpose. She blessed herself in the midst of her grief; and making much of this only solace in misfortune, she recalled it a thousand times a day.

She was permitted to walk along the beach, when the weather was fine, during the absence of the monarch; though M'Dermot always followed at a distance. Dorcas was her companion; and when tired with the powers of wind, or sun, they would repose under the shelter of a hanging rock, which shot forth in wild and craggy majesty, be-girt with samphire.

Many a pearl dropt from the lovely eye, seeking its native shore, and many a sigh mixed with the gale

gale which blew towards it. Dorcas would catch the infection,—and regret the hour that mingled her in such a plot.

Julia got daily better in health from these excursions; her beauty returned, and hope sometimes would throw a gleam across her fancy, that Wentworth would be tired of her obstinacy, and on her promise of inviolable secrecy, suffer her to depart. This idea was frequently suggested by Dorcas; as she saw it always had the effect of a cordial on the depressed spirits of her prisoner.

On the return of Wentworth, Julia forsook her walks, and confined herself to her chamber, in order to avoid the importunity she dreaded; but finding, after two days, she did not appear, he informed her by letter, that his patience was almost exhausted; he could not live in this retired place without her; and if she did not suffer his company in the parlour, he should make her a visit above stairs.

Alarmed at a commencement of the smallest freedom, she went down to dinner; but declared, if Dorcas did not make one of the party, she would not touch any thing. Dorcas was placed, therefore, in the trio; and Julia was satisfied.

Wentworth feasted, it is true, but it was his eyes: Julia appeared to him an angel; returning health had visited her cheek; but the languor of her whole form was quite enchantment. Silent he gazed, astonished at her charms,—nor dared to touch or speak, lest the fair vision should dissolve in air.

Uneasy at the stare, she frowned. He then drew breath, and found she was a woman.

After dinner, he renewed the subject of matrimony,—displayed the presents he had brought for her acceptance,—and ordering M'Dermot to open

open a wooden case, which lay at a distance, he displayed a variety of volumes, with which it was filled.

"If you mean me your prisoner for life," rejoined Julia, "this will be the most acceptable offering of the whole; but I have a better opinion of you; the treatment I have received, since I have been in this Castle, does not denote a want of humanity. You certainly must be sensible I never can unite my hand with yours; we cannot command our affections; suffer me only to depart; I will bind myself most solemnly, never to divulge the author of my trouble: Nay, I will do more; I will pray for you, and vindicate you, if suspected. On my knees I pray to heaven and you, for freedom."

Wentworth fell on his immediately, and began to cry most piteously: "Cannot break my own heart.—love you better than ever,—never part,—not till death, sobbed forth this hero—"

Julia, disgusted with his folly, and finding her generosity had worked a contrary effect to her intentions, arose to leave the room; but he followed her, and holding her robe, "Only say you will be mine, in three months, fix, or even twelve; I will wait." "Never," she cried. "Then you shall by—" rejoined the hero; and he swore an oath, which terrified her.

Sorry for her precipitate decision, which she found had moved him to this violence, she assumed a smile, and turning, added, "Patience will do best with both of us." Then left him, to give way to those tears which pressed forward to relieve her spirits.

Dorcas could not help offering her advice, though premising it, by asking pardon. She alledged, as Mr. Wentworth had offered time, she thought

thought he ought not to have been irritated by so absolute a denial.

"I was to blame, Dorcas; I see it now," rejoined Julia; "but I have never been used to practice artifice; and my heart revolted at his offers; but I will learn precaution: Let us go to the beach; I long for the hollow murmur of the rock, and the soft heaving of the water, that swells its bosom, till, wetting the dry sand, it breaks and scatters tears with mine."

They wandered forth, but was soon followed by M'Dermot, whose diligence never slept, when he was well paid for it. They strolled along the strand, till the moon, emerging from the deep, spangled the curling tremor of the sea, that rose to kiss the breeze that played upon it. Julia's agitation ceased; she stood, lost in the pleasing calm; the clock struck ten, and M'Dermot called to supper; she turned towards the castle, resolving to act with more precaution.

As she entered the room, without being solicited, and took her place at table, Wentworth relaxed his frowning face, and did the honours of his station not amiss. After supper she consented that the books should be ranged in her apartment. As to his other offerings, she urged, in her present state, ornaments were not only useless, but burthensome. Fearful, however, of giving offence, she changed the conversation, and talked more that night than usual. Wentworth was delighted, and after waiting on her to the stair foot, returned to tell M'Dermot, he should be yet a happy man.

'Tis near three months since the distress at Orwell Manor had well nigh deprived the world of most of its inhabitants; but having stood the first shock, time, and the excellent consolation given

given them by Sir Theodore and St. Clair, had reduced the poignancy of grief to a fixed melancholy. All habited in black, the circumstances suited with the dress : The song,—the dance,—the lute was heard no more ; but from each chamber, as you passed, the sigh broke forth.

Mrs. Byron had forgot to smile ; and her cold inanimate motion, was a sad emblem of the change within. Every means had been tried, to gain intelligence of Julia. During those efforts, she was more herself ; but when all failed, she gave up joy, and seemed to live because she could not die.

Gertrude, whose marriage garments ought to have decked her for the bridal hour, was clad in sable, and the impatient lover put aside for time of mourning.

Sir Theodore had returned to BellePont ; Captain Gordon was gone to his regiment ; and Lord Maldown retired to Mrs. Warton's, from whence, however, he made frequent calls at the Manor.

Sir Theodore was little less unhappy from another cause : His son was not yet arrived ; and though, St. Clair had heard from him, he dared not tell it to the Baronet : Friendship had confided that to youth, he could not trust to the revered parent.

You are acquainted with the disaster which prevented the first intentions of young Theodore, and why he left the ship, and was seeking another. There were many passengers on board, at the time of the accident, one of which was a widow, who, at an early period of her life, had been united to old age and wealth. She knew not what love was, till some years after their marriage ; but when that bewitching passion, once found its way to her heart, she seldom was without an object ; for if accident, or design removed her favourite, she only

only sought out another; not from depravity, but from a want of something to fix her mind upon.

She was extremely pretty, very engaging, and her voice, either speaking or singing, was fascinating: such a woman, in a state of alarm, must be an interesting object.

Theodore was by nature gallant; he offered her every assistance in his power; and as it was dark, made it his business to get her and her suite to the shore, as soon as possible. They were some miles from any habitation: He got the sail of the boat from the seamen, erected a tent, and after laying cloaks, &c. on the ground, he persuaded the Lady to repose, while he kept the insects, so troublesome in those parts, from incommoding her. As soon as it was day light, her servants were dispatched for a carriage; and she returned, an unexpected visitor, to her own house, bringing Theodore along with her:

As he had given up that country for ever, his houses and equipage were all discharged; and he gladly accepted the invitation, to remain at the widow's till the next ships should sail.

She lived in the eastern style of magnificence: Her property was immense, and she had studied the *arts* of luxury, so that refinements of pleasure should succeed each other. Theodore was delighted; and as he never had been seriously in love, he thought this attachment as permanent as any of the kind need to be, concluding it would last to the end of the passage to England. They however missed a second opportunity of sailing, by forming a party with various pleasant people, up the country, where they outstayed their time; and Theodore, very much chagrined, found, at his

his return, the ship had sailed, without even a letter from him, to assign a cause for his delay.

This was only a prelude to other evils; for soon after, the visible ill health of the widow, and serious concern she was under, gave him every reason to believe, that nothing but marrying her, could bring him honourably off this affair. He was very averse to both, from former reports, and the little inclination he found to wedlock. His father had not been consulted, nor could he break the affair to him; but in the fulness of perplexity, had transmitted the whole to St. Clair, only omitting the Lady's name. He likewise added, at the bottom of the letter, "I have just heard that the governor has superseded you, and put his nephew in the office. I go to enquire the truth of this report; but the ship is under sail, so I must dispatch my letter at any rate."

St. Clair had kept in his own bosom every word of this letter, (even the postscript) determined neither to give uneasiness to his friends, or forsake them in their distress. Suppressing, therefore, every sentiment but love and compassion, he persevered in his affiduities, and sought only to alleviate those misfortunes he could not cure.

Two thousand pounds being the whole of his savings in India, was a miserable resource to look to; but at present he resolved *not* to look that way.

The time for Lady Maldown's visit to Mrs. Barbara had passed, and her ladyship had fulfilled her promise, and also called at the Manor; but Mrs. Byron was so very unfit for any society, that her Ladyship and Lady Sophia, too much affected for their own peace, abridged their stay, and proceeded to Bellepont, where they were joined by his Lordship.

Sir

Sir Theodore took an opportunity to open the affair that so interested the lover, to Lady Maldown; and a long conversation ensued; in which Sir Theodore failed not to give the fair Armenia her due merit.

Lady Maldown had already seen her with a partial eye; and Lord Maldown was now called in, to speak his own sentiments freely.

Her Ladyship was well acquainted with her son's peculiar turn of mind; and always presaged he would never marry a court Lady. She assured him, not being accustomed to disapprove of his conduct, she did not think she ever should have occasion to censure it; but that one thing was to be considered: His aunt Barbara had strong prejudices; and though in her centered a fortune sufficient for six women, she might not consent to a union, without considering the want of it in a wife, as a very great stumbling block to her nephew.

This never occurred to Lord Maldown, nor would he have sacrificed half an hour of Armenia's life for all his aunt's possessions; but in compliance with the desire of his mother and Sir Theodore, he submitted to solicit her approbation, sanctioning his request by the consent of his mother. Sir Theodore, however, represented to the lover, that impatience was useless,—for a few months no proposal of that kind could be with propriety received in Mrs. Byron's family.

Our charming Alicia had lost much of her wonted vivacity; her friends were distressed; her lover was absent, and she had suffered him to write to her, without the knowledge of her father; and sensible of the impropriety of the action, it imbibed the pleasure each letter conveyed to her mind.

C H A P. XXIII.

CAPTAIN GORDON, from an invincible pride, could not stand the idea of a refusal, from the father of her whose hand he solicited; the only reason for his not making an application to Sir Theodore. He loved Miss Mandville passionately; and had more than once touched on the subject of Scotch marriages; perfectly assured, in his own mind, no other means could unite them; as the Baronet had (to please his daughter) refused many advantageous offers. How then could the soldier hope for success? So matters stood, and so we shall leave them, to return to the prison of my heroine.

The tumult has subsided,---but what are these that lay beneath the table---weltering---in wine? Poor Wentworth, is it come to this? But let us pass on, and mount the turret. The affrighted Julia, assisted by Dorcas, had not only locked the door, but pushed the heavy drawers against it; and placing themselves in their chairs, passed this as they had done many nights of late, disturbed by apprehension of assault.

Mr. Wentworth had repeated his visits to L_____, and unwittingly invited two of his companions to a fishing party, in his boat. The day proved rough, and the wind set for the bay. To avoid worse weather, they took its shelter. Wentworth, as soon as landed, sent one of the men to the castle, with orders for M'Dermot to lock the door, at the foot of the turret, and to inform his

sister

sister of the reason of this proceeding ; as he could not avoid bringing company home, under the circumstances that had befallen them. This being complied with, and his companions housed, they began to rally him on the privacy of this retreat, and swore some enchanted damsel was hid in a corner of it, and they would search for her. M'Dermot being present, uncorking some wine, told them he would satisfy their curiosity immediately.

Wentworth began to tremble, and for the first time doubted the fidelity of his valet ; but seeing him take to that door, leading to the kitchen, he again revived ; when a few minutes brought him back, ushering in the old woman, and presenting her as the damsel enchanted. " Faith you have done it effectually, Harcourt, by changing her into a witch," said one of them. At the same time M'Dermot, in a play-house whisper, notified to the other, that his master had killed his man : An affair of honour, made retirement necessary : " Well done, my brave fellow," cried he, addressing Wentworth, " give me your hand : Pricked, a dozen in my life, only manslaughter. Fill me a bumper !" Avaunt Beldam," added he, pushing out the old woman. " I must have more wine."

Supper being served, they got perfectly intoxicated, and next morning Wentworth carried them back to L— ; happy to get rid of them, without a discovery of the true state of the castle, and its inhabitants.

At his return he was all penitence and sorrow ; implored pardon for the alarm, such riot and noise must have occasioned Julia ; promised it should never happen again : but there he was again mistaken ; these bucks, fond of any thing new, in about

about a week after, repeated their visits, in a hired boat, and brought two more of their friends.

Now scarce a week passed, without their intrusion; encreasing in their numbers,—drinking his wines, and winning his money.

Julia scarce ever dared venture forth, and if she did, it was just after their departure; for the next day she risqued the meeting a fresh set.

Wentworth, almost beside himself, when he had time to reflect, could come to no determination how to act, with regard to Julia, before they returned to harass him afresh.

Distracted with fears of Julia's being discovered, and tormented with the dread of losing her, doubt so preyed upon his mind, that he was perfectly miserable; despair and punishment stared him full in the face; If she was once found out, he should lose her at any rate; as he did not doubt she would, to create friends, unfold all that had been done by her enemy. He was sometimes tempted to let her go, and avail himself of her promise of secrecy; then love stepped forth to forbid it. He now thought of preparing an apartment in the subterranean, to convey her to, on the approach of company; but that again might injure her health. In short, perplexities arose so numerously upon him, that to get rid of them, he resolved to marry her directly; and sent a message, requesting her company immediately, with which she complied, always attended by Dorcas.

His address was now more peremptory than usual: He expected a final answer; he was ruining his fortune,—risquing his neck,—and deprived of all comfort by her cruelty. She must either marry him by her own consent, or be compelled to it, for he would stay no longer.

Julia was silent,—tears were her only eloquence

quence. " Speak, madam," added Wentworth, assuming a stern air, which his voice denied. " I have been already too dilatory in my own happiness." " Talk not of happiness with me," cried the weeping fair one. " Can force bring joy? The hour that forces me to be your wife, shall be my last."

Wentworth started, knit his brows, and gnashed his teeth, spoke broken sentences, scarce understood. Dorcas besought him to have patience; but, breaking from her, and casting a glance of wrath at Julia, he rushed out of the room. Dorcas continued, " For pity's sake, dear lady, what have you done? Perhaps at this moment he sends for the priest; shall I go to him? shall I say you relent? Accept his former offer of limiting a time for consideration; say, in a year or less, your answer may be favourable." " Haste, or all will be over! go then, said Julia, " say any thing your kind heart dictates; but beware of promises; I hold them sacred."

Dorcas flew into the hall; where Wentworth stood in deep discourse with M'Dermot.

Dorcas, with great humility, and a trembling voice, begged to be heard, by her master. She praised his goodness in a former case, and added, if he would grant what he had offered then, Julia was ready to accept the terms; and in six months she was assured his kindness, and her own reflections, might work that, by free will, too dearly gained by force. He stormed and raved,—a perfect tragic hero! She reasoned, prayed, and menaced, till overpowered by his own want of stability, three months respite was obtained from him.

Dorcas was pleased, Julia felt humbled, and Wentworth swelled as the arbiter of her fate.

It was now four months since this solitary abode had been the prison of my heroine; and no shadow of liberty had glided in, to cheer the scene. She began to blame herself for supineness; she had tried openly to gain her guards, 'tis true; but she had not attempted to escape by any other means. The terrors of launching forth amongst strangers, wild and savage as those she had already seen, hitherto had restrained these ideas; but now, grown desperate by confinement, and dread of what might befall her in one of the scenes of riot, she resolved, if there were a possibility to steal forth, even in the dead of night; though Dorcas was accustomed to lock her in as soon as she went to bed, and slept herself in the room beneath. The extremity of invention was racked to execute her purpose. Her mind, awakened by the idea of freedom, found an employment that could not be unpleasing; and her first essay was to examine the exact construction of her apartment: She sounded it round and round, but it was all solid: She mounted on a chair, and tried the bars of the window; these also resisted her efforts: Undismayed, however, by disappointment, she slept little that night, and trusted to better success in the next trial. About eleven in the morning, a fresh importation of *Scavoir Vivres* arrived at the castle; and at noon, the wind arose, and continued to augment more and more, till it became a perfect storm. Julia, confined to her apartment, watched the terrible force of the wind on the ocean, as she stood at the casement; it broke against her favourite rock, and sprayed it to the summit; and on the beach came tumbling in such frothing billows as threatened to encroach and swallow all.

The sight was grand and awful; and it drew her attention from the discordant song and boisterous

terous mirth below, which had succeeded to a plenteous meal.

She was standing on a chair, resting her arms upon the window, when her eye met an object on the vast space of waters. It was a ship "Oh Dorcas, look at that tremendous sight," said she. "My heart fails me!" A flash of light blazed on the sea, and a gun was heard. "That is a signal of distress, I have been told," added she; "who can assist them? who relieve them?"

Voices were now heard under the window, and much running to and fro in the castle. Dorcas stepped to the kitchen, by a long narrow passage, that led round the interior of the building, and soon learned, that the gentlemen were going to try if the bark could safely venture to sea; as a ship lay in danger of foundering every instant.

With this intelligence, she went again up stairs, and heartily joined her Lady in prayers, for the deliverance of the vessel.

They again mounted to the window; the bark was manned; they saw a small sail spread; they saw Wentworth stand on the shore, sending his eyes and wishes with them, but for his person, it remained behind,—too much in love, to risk being drowned in the cause of common humanity.

"Pusillanimous wretch," cried Julia, would you were in the ship."

Dorcas smiled, and longed to say amen.—Night advanced; thunder and lightning increased the tempest; they still saw the ship drawing nearer to the shore; they also saw the bark return, with the sail split, and in imminent danger. This they judged from the exertions of the sailors; but day light failed; and the only view they now had, was by the lightning, and the lanthorns of the ship, when tossed by a wave, above the gulph.

Julia

Julia sat down and wept, refusing a light, in order, if possible, to gain a glimpse of the vessel. She again opened the casement, and leant on the iron bars. The rain beat in; the lightning flashed in her face; the wind blew her lovely locks in rude disorder; yet still her anxious eye sought out the vessel. Lights moved along the shore; voices shouted; then dreadful shrieks mingled with the howling storm, and terror and confusion issued from every quarter; a fearful flash shot through the air; by which Julia thought she saw the ship close to her rock; from it, indeed, a chain of hidden foes, reached under water near a mile; and true enough the ship had struck.

Julia shrank from the window, and cried, "All is lost." Dorcas shut the casement and sat down beside her.

The confusion now seemed to enter the house; and Julia prayed her to fetch a light. On going down, Dorcas met a multitude of people pouring into the castle. Some were borne on the arms of others, apparently dead: Women, children, blacks, and whites, mingled their lamentations and their joy,—some forcing their way back against the torrent, to seek some absent friend; others hanging on the bosoms of those they had thought lost for ever.

The gentlemen of the castle now entered, and said, they believed no lives were lost; but that the cloisters were quite full of poor dripping souls, that could not be disposed of, unless Mr. Harcourt would exert himself for their accommodation.

That gentleman, who wanted not compassion, when it did not clash with particular feelings, immediately called for M'Dermot, who had been also buried in the throng, ordered a cask of liquor to be opened, and every one to be supplied according

to their wants, putting all the women and children into the parlour, where there was already a table spread with wines, and a good fire, and the dessert, which had remained untouched; when the gentlemen hurried to the sea side, to try to assist the ship. He sent the old woman in, with orders to do all she could for them.

The officers and male passengers, he kept in the hall with themselves, and the kitchen and stables were appropriated to the ship's crew, who could do nothing towards saving either cargo or vessel, till day light appeared.

Julia, impatient of Dorcas's long stay, rose from her seat, and felt for the door. She grazed her hand along the lock, and tore the flesh against one of the screws. A thought instantly struck her, that could those screws be undone, the door would open of itself. Resolved upon the trial, as soon as Dorcas should retire, she felt a transport long unknown before; and when Dorcas returned, and opened her budget, spite of her anxiety for these distressed sufferers, her eye glanced to the lock with unremitting attention.

When Dorcas went down, to bring up Julia's supper, M'Dermot bid her be gone, telling her, he himself would bring it up. He thought her appearance might induce some one of the too many strangers, to ask questions, and he doubted her fidelity, of late, very much, from the great affection she shewed her mistress.

Dorcas grew huffed, and told him, he was too proud of an ill office. He retorted, by swearing, if she prated, she should be a nun; which was a never failing quietus to this poor girl, who instantly retired.

During this altercation, Julia had been examining the lock, and was convinced she could be free, if

if an implement could be procured to turn the screws.

Dorcas's feet, upon the stairs, drove her back to her seat. She entered in tears; Julia eagerly inquired the cause, and when informed, she bade her go back, and tell M'Dermot she would not sup at all, but take some bread and wine, which Dorcas brought her. At the usual hour, she left her Lady, whose heart palpitated with eagerness.— Willing, however, to be thought asleep, she remained a whole hour, only viewing the lock; before she began her operations; then gently stepping to the door, she opened her pocket book, and applying her knife, she tried at the screws; but such a violent noise issued from the hall, that she trembled with agitation; yet this noise seemed to favour her operations; and the first screw came out. Elated with success, she assailed the other; but too much impelled by haste, she forced her whole strength, and the knife broke, and cut her hand. Heedless of the wound, she searched the pocket book, and while the blood poured down her fingers, the scissars finished what the knife begun, and the brazen trophy hung dismembered. In an instant her elevated hands and eyes spoke her thankfulness. She determined to go down, and pass by the narrow passage into the parlour, which also had a door, that communicated with the passage, and throw herself into the protection of the women. As she descended the stone stairs, the noise in the hall became so violent, that she stopped for an instant. Some quarrel had taken place; the chairs moved as if the combat was going to begin; what could she do? go back! never! she stepped on. The door to the hall was but two steps farther; and when past that she had nothing to fear. Advancing speedily, the rusty

hinges of the hall door cracked ; they gave way, and door and men fell into the passage, and nearly crushed the lovely fugitive.

The sinking hero caught, as he dropped, the twig that stood beside him, and, senseless of his power, had dragged her with him. Julia endeavoured to disengage herself, though almost frantic with terror, when a gentleman, who lifted up the conqueror, and was endeavouring to bring him to reason, espied her struggling to get free. Darting forward, he raised her in his arms, and brought her to the hall. "Oh save me.—save me from Wentworth ? Take me to the women," cried the affrighted fair one.

M'Dermot stepped up to the gentleman, and desired him to let the young Lady go, and he would conduct her to a place of safety.

She cast her eyes up to the stranger, with such a supplicating look : " Will you then suffer him to take me back to prison ?" she cried. " Never, dear Lady ! no injury shall you meet, while I am near you ; but you bleed ; you are wounded ! Here is some dreadful mystery to be unravelled ; let us however only attend to the present ill ; where is the hurt ? but let me carry you to the parlour." For she had partly supported herself against his bosom, while his arm sustained the rest of her sinking form.

The whole company were so struck by this new apparition, that blows, nay even words, were suspended ; and Wentworth lay stunned upon the broken door, without signs of life. That he should be killed, and this beauty rise out of his ashes, was an incomprehensible event, which struck every one silent.

Her dress was white muslin, though now spotted with blood ; her hair, blown into ringlets by

the

the evening's storm, fell uncontroled upon her neck ; and her eyes darting with terror, penetrated into the hearts of the beholders.

The stranger having conveyed the suffering Julia to the care of the ladies, returned to the hall, in order to look after the ghost of the slain.

M'Dermot had by this time lifted up his master, untipt his neckcloth, and fell to applications necessary to recall him to life.

Wentworth's fall was more the occasion of a suspension of sense, than any hurt his antagonist had offered him, which was simply a wrestle, to disarm him from using an unfair weapon, which he had seized in a moment of irritation, namely, a bottle.

The affair had begun in jest : After many bummers of congratulation, on the preservation of the strangers, the L—— gentlemen, going over the late events, asked Wentworth why he was so dismayed, on their taking to the bark, as to remain behind.

It was an unexpected interrogation, and suited not the temper of his mind. He was hurt at the universal smile, which he conceived pointed at him ; and in order to establish his good name, he asked the Hibernian, if he took him for a coward. He answered by an immoderate laugh ; which so provoked his host, that he clenched the neck of the bottle ; not with an intent to use it, but to have it taken from him.

The company all rose up, and his friend laying hold of him, they staggered together against the hall door, by the fall of which he received a blow, from the stones, on the back of his head, which silenced that impulse of heroism, so portentous to his guests.

His

His valet conveyed him to bed, and the surgeon of the ship breathed a vein, which brought him to himself. No sooner were the master and man left to themselves, but M'Dermot conveyed the woeful tidings of Julia's being discovered to the ear of his disciple, intimating, at the same time, that their necks were in danger.

But I must leave them to settle their grievances, according to the necessity of the case, and return to my lovely Julia, accompanied by the stranger, whose kindness she had experienced.

She was sitting between two ladies, recounting her sad tale, and interesting every hearer, by her beauty and elegance of manner; for the disorder of her dress could not deprive her of what nature had so profusely bestowed; and when she arose to thank her deliverer, on his entering the room, a glow of gratitude so enlivened every feature, that she was quite divine.

"My tongue is inadequate to express what I owe you," said she, darting up a ray sublime; "but when I see my mother, my sisters, Sir Theodore, my Alicia, they all shall thank you."

"Sir Theodore, Alicia," rejoined the stranger, "What Sir Theodore? What Alicia? You do not name Mandville."

"I should have done it," added Julia, breathing quick with expectation. "Then double glory waits me," cried the transported speaker. "I am a Mandville!—I am Theodore!"

A crimson tinge flushed through the cheek of Julia,—her eye fell to the ground,—a sudden tremor shot through her frame,—a sentiment unknown thrilled at her heart, and she sunk to her chair, oppressed with tumult.

Theodore, inspired by concurring circumstances, instinctively fell on one knee, and taking her hand:

hand: "Tell me fair stranger, am I too sanguine, or Alicia false? Have I not known you in her letters? Am I not blessed in seeing Julia Gordon?"

Julia withdrew her hand; and repelling a too tender thought, rejoined, "You see before you, Sir, that Julia who already owes more than a life can pay in grateful deeds. To you, Alicia and Sir Theodore, I cannot speak,—let your own noble soul imagine what I feel."

The dignity with which she spoke this sentence, brought the champion on his feet; and Mrs. Watson, one of the ladies, who sat beside Julia, bid Theodore retire; for the agitation of that night, would be too much for her young friend, who she should now consider as her daughter, till delivered up to Mrs. Byron.

Julia raised her hand to her lips, and a silent drop stole down her cheek in thankfulness.

C H A P. XXIV.

MRS. WATSON was an elderly Lady, who had spent many years in India, and was now, or rather had been, on her way to England, to enjoy a competency in declining years, with her husband and children; the latter being already settled at different schools near London.

This

This good woman prayed Julia to endeavour to get some repose on one of the beds, or matrasses, that the old woman had spread for those whose terrors or hurts had required rest; but so much was she afraid of the appearance of Wentworth, that she resisted every persuasion to repose herself, and watched the remainder of the night in meditation.

Theodore, though not perfectly informed of the history of Julia's imprisonment, could not be at ease till he had questioned Wentworth about it. He soon learned from that gentleman's Irish friends, that he had been known to them by the name of Harcourt.

This added a fresh instance of villainy to the gathering heap. He called to M'Dermot, who passed frequently to and from his master's chamber, and asked if he might visit Mr. Wentworth? But was answered, his master was fallen asleep, and as he was much bruised, he was loth to disturb him, determined however, as soon as he was awake to speak to him. He joined the sailors, who, as day appeared, were in haste to view the ship, the storm being quite over. They saw a great prospect of her being got off with very little damage. Her valuable cargo was first to be got out; and then a high tide promised every success, in setting her afloat. The passengers, however, did not choose to remain so long from their desired home, and it was purposed to borrow Wentworth's bark, to convey them where the packets, bound for England, might receive them.

One of the gentlemen observed, that he had not seen the bark, as they traversed along the shore, but supposed it might be hauled up in some creek for greater safety. On examining the coast, no bark was to be seen; but on passing round the rocks,

rocks, they despaired her, crowding all the fail she could, to the open sea.

Theodore, mad with conjectures, hastened back to the castle; where, passing into the narrow passage, from whence he had seen M'Dermot enter, he explored the chambers; but Wentworth was not to be found; he then mounted the turret, and seeing a door open, and much blood on the floor, he thought he now had found him; but still was he foiled; this chamber was deserted also. He again descended, and seeing another door, he tried that, but finding it fast, he applied his shoulder, and burst into the room, where poor Dorcas lay, who, terrified to death, with the continual tumult of the night, had not closed an eye. This abrupt entrance to her chamber, though, by a handsome young gentleman, soon brought her, unadorned, upon her knees before him, not knowing but her fate was already determined.

Theodore conceiving this to be another of Wentworth's confined damsels, prayed her to be comforted, and kindly raised her up, assuring her, she was at liberty, and that he would convey her to a place of safety.

Dorcas, from her total ignorance of his meaning, and struck by the beauty and dignity of his person, involuntarily exclaimed, "Oh, Sir, my Lady Julia! suffer me to go to her!" "Do you belong to Miss Gordon, then?" answered Theodore, she did not mention you." "Have you seen her, Sir?" asked Dorcas. "She is under my particular care," answered our hero. "Then what will become of me?" rejoined Dorcas, weeping bitterly. Dres yourself, and come to the parlour, said Theodore." "I will do as you bid me, Sir, though I know not what may

be my fate. I shall rejoice if my Lady is happy."

Theodore retired, and finding his farther search useles, concluded that Wentworth, not choosing to be publicly exposed, had actually set sail in the bark.

The morning being advanced, and the ladies, impatient for a determination, as to their further destination, threw the door open, and summoned their friends together. The two Hibernians, who had been so active, in endeavours to save the ship, now exerted themselves, to do honour to the house, (as it was certain Wentworth had decamped,) and ordered a breakfast to be got ready. They had been able to procure provision for the men, from the vessel, who were now all hands at work; and the old woman, her husband, and the servants, were set to make coffee, chocolate, and tea ready for the ladies.

Theodore, advancing to his fair friend, informed her of the departure of her enchanter, and begged to know some particulars concerning the beginning of the affair. She, as concisely as she could, threw a light upon the whole of her adventure; but was interrupted by the appearance of poor Drocas, who, in the most supplicating posture, advanced towards her.

Julia, who had conceived an affection for this girl, from her propriety of conduct, held out her hand to her, which she kissed, and said, "I throw myself on your mercy, madam; I know my life is in your power; but I have trusted to that mercy, sooner than seek to escape, and never see you more."

Theodore, who till now had been silent, exclaimed, "Were *you* then an assistant in injuring this Lady?" "An involuntary one, I assure you, Sir,"

Sir," replied Dorcas. "She never injured me," cried Julia. "After breakfast I will explain every thing; in the meantime, Dorcas, you are still my servant." The grateful creature sobbed aloud, and retired to a window, to hide her shame, her sorrow, and her joy.

After breakfast Mr. Watson, accompanied the two L——gentlemen, in their boat, in order to land at the first place where carriages or horses could be had, to remove those passengers who would not wait for the ship; and the ladies walked along the beach, where various thoughts worked various effects on the mind of our heroine. She longed to send one line to Orwell Manor; but Theodore had written about a dozen, by Mr. Watson, to be put into the post for Sir Theodore, beseeching him to open the matter to Mrs. Byron, by degrees. It was incoherent, it is true, but said enough, when it said, Julia and Theodore were well.

In the course of their walk Julia went into a minute account of Wentworth's conduct, from her first knowledge of him, and could not help expressing a wish, (for the sake of Lord Orwell) his name should be forgotten; but Theodore, in the first place, shewed her the impossibility of keeping that a secret, which was discovered before so many people, and proved to her, that if he was not proceeded against, either by private or public means, he would, no doubt, renew his attempts against her person, and keep her in continual dread.

Julia seized his arm, and looking terrified: "Name it not," she cried. He smiled at her energy,—pressed the lovely arm,—and as the blushing Julia looked distressed, released it.

There were near twenty cabin passengers, counting

ing servants and children. The ladies were all particular, in attention to our heroine; but as Mrs. Watson, had at first adopted her, Julia felt a grateful respect and deference for every thing she said; and it was agreed upon, that those two Ladies, and Theodore, and Mr. Watson, should take the shortest route to Holy-Head, with their suite; that if carriages could not be procured, the long boat of the ship should carry them off, as soon as Mr. Watson returned: For Julia's impatience was afloat, and no bound could be prescribed to it.

On their return, Theodore advised, that what was of value in the castle, should be locked up, and a seal set on the doors, and the keys sent to Lord Orwell; as he could not forget, that amidst all his faults, Wentworth had given an asylum to him and his fellow sufferers, in the moment of distress.

Julia thought Dorcas might be useful in this business, and named her for the purpose.

"Are you then determined on placing a confidence in one who had the power to give you freedom, and yet kept you prisoner," said Theodore. "I place my confidence in one," replied Julia, "who neither love for me, compassion for her sex, nor future fortune could bribe to break her word: She dared be just, even in a bad cause, what will she not be in a good one?" "Noble, angelic woman," cried Theodore, and passed forward to Dorcas. "You and I, mistress, will do a good act," said he, "Conduct me, if you please, through all the apartments, and let us place in safety what may be of use or value to your late master." "My vow was my master, Sir, I own no other," returned Dorcas.

Julia made a motion for her to go, and Theodore

dore followed her. After locking and sealing the different rooms, they reached the turret, and Mr. Mandville inquired whose chamber this had been, that so out-shone the others? Dorcas informed him it was her Lady's; "And from that window, Sir," said she, "we saw the ship, and watched the dreadful storm; and as the rain fell hard, so did Miss Julia's tears. She little thought, dear soul, it was her deliverer that caused her sorrow."

Theodore longed very much to embrace Dorcas, but as she might misconstrue the *sentiment divine* to something sensual, he forbore; but from that moment, he commenced her friend, and ever since remains so.

About five in the evening, Mr. Watson returned, on horseback, to the Castle, and informed his expecting friends, that no post carriages could come within five miles of them, so that they must mount behind the gentlemen, or wait till the next day, to go round in a boat.

Julia, who could not brook the thoughts of a delay, declared she could walk, five miles very well; but Mr. Watson assured her, the part of the country they must pass, was so wild, and the people they might meet so uncivilized, that in the dark he thought it adviseable to be mounted.

Mrs. Watson would certainly have passed another night in their present habitation, had she not felt for the anxiety of her young friend; but so desirous was she to promote her satisfaction, that she immediately consented to try her equestrian powers, though somewhat corpulent, and unused to that exercise.

Mr. Watson had procured several horses; but some of those refractory animals refused the portmanteau behind. Now, as the town was but a small ill accommodated one, from which he had taken

taken his carriages and cavalry, he was obliged to put up with what was offered, or proceed twenty miles further. Two chaises were all the place afforded; and the horses he had pressed into the service, as they came in view, without considering whether they would answer the purpose or not.

The chaises were in waiting at the appointed place; and Mr. Watson was now preparing to find a steady steed for his Lady; which afforded no small amusement to those spectators, who were not interested in hurrying their departure.

Mr. Watson had nothing very feminine in his figure, being six feet high, and proportionably large; he was a bon vivant, and carried it in strong characters in his face. He had borrowed one of the black girl's red petticoats and cloak, to try if the horses were used to carry a woman, and ascended a broken wall, to mount behind Theodore, who insisted upon it, that he was an excellent horseman, though somewhat out of practice. The various evolutions of the animals, to get rid of a load unusually placed, together with the dexterity of the riders, to keep possession of seats with such difficulty gained, raised much laughter and some terror; for as Mr. Watson was forced to descend behind, from one or two of them, with great haste, the kicks and entre chasse of the brutes might have proved it an unlucky frolic.

Howbeit, one was found, at last, that tamely submitted to the double burthen; and Mrs. Watson, with great good humour, placed herself behind her husband; Theodore walking several paces at her side, till all fears were dissipated; he then called the servant to take his post, and went back for Julia.

He proposed seating her on the saddle, and leading

leading the horse himself, as it was now almost dark ; but she assured him she was used to riding, and though on a man's saddle, could do very well in the slow pace Mrs. Watson went ; but he would not consent to such a risque ; so she was obliged to mount behind, as her friend had done.

The rest of the horses were divided between Dorcas, the black girls, and men, which were not very few in number, belonging to Theodore and Mr. Watson.

Dorcas, of course, was prefered, and Pompey and Hector guarded her, while Cleopatra, and the rest of the Asiatics got on as well as they could, sometimes mounted, but oftner prostrate.

Nothing very extraordinary happened during their evening ride, save what passed in the heart of Mr. Mandville. This seemed the happiest moment of his life ; and he could not help wondering amongst the various scenes, contrived to create delight, none ever came so near his idea of perfection as the present,—when he found himself seated on a stumbling jade, in a cold October evening, in a moist and foggy climate. Strange to tell ! yet no less strange than true.

In about an hour or more, they reached the carriages, to the no small joy of Mrs. Watson, and great relief of her husband, who, for many years, had not felt so tight an embrace. He seemed delivered from a straight waistcoat ; both her arms having strained, to encircle him, during the whole time she was on the horse.

Now placed at her ease, she found leisure and inclination for laughter, which she freely indulged.

Julia took her seat beside her, and the female followers packed in the other chaise, while the gentlemen pursued their route as before, only less incumbered.

They

They proceeded onwards twenty miles, and then thought of repose, which for many hours, not one of the party had tasted. Julia thought every hour lost, that hindered their progreffion; but wearied nature conquered thought; and having once overcome, she triumphed for five hours successively.

Dorcas was ordered to rise with the day, that nothing on their part should detain the travellers; and Julia was ready to descend before seven. They opened the chamber door; all was still; Dorcas went down; no soul appeared; all was comfortles; no fires; the fumes of the last night's whisky and tobacco still vapoured round the kitchen; so Dorcas turned round, and went up again. Sad intelligence for her impatient mistress.

"No body up yet!" said Julia. "What shall we do? Did you see a pen and ink?" "I think I did madam." "Then, good Dorcas, bring it me;—paper I saw on the sideboard where we supped."

These matters being adjusted, Julia began a letter to her mother; where the overflowing of her soul spoke so forcibly, that her very self dissolved in tears.

A gentle tap struck on the door; Dorcas opened it; it was Theodore; she brushed off the drops with her hand, and smiled. "So soon equipp'd, ---writing,---and in sorrow," said he. "May I come in? Have you a cause for grief? Let me fly to relieve it." "Mine were not tears," replied Julia; "they were the exhalations of the soul, drawn forth by gratitude to heaven and you; but let us go down, and send off my letter,--it may reach England before us."

Theodore presented his hand, and sighed so deep,

deep, that Julia blushed, and hastened to the parlour.

Mrs. Watson soon after entered; and now the bustle again took place for a speedy departure,—for they had yet two days journey to Dublin. I think they proceeded without any mishap, to the end of their route; and arrived in Dublin about two hours after the packet had set sail.

This was a cruel disappointment, particularly as the wind soon took an unfavourable change.

Mr. Mandville endeavoured to beguile the moments, by enquiring out every thing that could amuse; and the perfect good humour and vivacity with which Mr. and Mrs. Watson entered into every proposal, to dissipate the chagrin of our fair friend, cheated disappointment of half its powers.

On the fourth day from their quitting the castle, Sir Theodore Mandville was sitting in his study at Bellepont, where he had of late spent most of his time, with a book before him, his arms leaning on the desk, and his forehead supported by them; a posture that spoke all was not right within.

It was near five months since he had been led to expect his son, and no friendly letter had arrived, even to soften the disappointment. He gave himself up to conjectures; and though studious to avoid courting misfortunes, he insensibly became absent and unfit for company, and spent his hours in framing delays that might occur, to prevent Theodore's arrival, and sometimes fixing his fate as decided for ever.

In these moments he sought out Alicia, who, no sooner encountered his dejected look, than she would throw her arms about him, and bathe his paternal face with her tears.

They,

They, as usual, made frequent visits to the Manor ; but there grieved on grief.

St. Clair had taken a cottage close beside it, and lived like a monk, giving up the world, after declaring his situation to Gertrude ; who in vain besought him to leave her, and by exertion and friends, strive to regain his employ.

C H A P. XXV.

ON the fourth day Stephen entered the study, and gave that letter Mr. Watson had carried to —, into the hand of the Baronet. He did not withdraw, but watched the countenance of his master, (a custom lately acquired by Stephen.)

He saw him eye the superscription, then tear the seal,—start up and clasp his hands in the air, than read it again, and hasten out of the study, to Miss Mandville's dressing-room.

Stephen grew alert, darted forward, and as he opened the door for his master, "Good news, madam," cried he; "very good news indeed."

Sir Theodore embraced his daughter, wished her joy a thousand times.

"Of what? dear Sir, relieve me."

"Prepare yourself, Alicia; oh double—double joy! Julia is found, and Theodore—my Theodore, conducts her!"

It was too much,—Alicia staggered, and the Baronet

Baronet looked round to Stephen for assistance, but he was gone; and Alicia's tears flowed to her own relief.

As soon as she could speak, she urged her father to set off directly for Orwell Manor; and taking up the letter, she read it, kissed it, and blessed it.

"We will go,—but we must act with caution, or we shall kill Mrs. Byron," said the Baronet; "yet if Julia and Theodore should arrive while we are absent?"

"Why, they must follow us; we shall have prepared the way," rejoined Alicia.

"Can I—can you—forego one hour's delay to see your brother?"

"Well then, Sir, we will write by Stephen to the Manor."

And she rung the bell; a servant came, and Stephen was ordered up.

"We thought, Sir, you had sent him out," replied the man; "for he is gone off full gallop about five minutes since, without saddle or boots."

"No matter," rejoined the Baronet; get the carriage up directly; we will go, Alicia; no selfish consideration shall make me forget what I owe at the Manor."

In half an hour they set out, and proceeded with all imaginable expedition; but they might have spared the horses; for Stephen had reached the goal before they had half run their course.

He had actually set out, as the footmen described, without any other preparation than a bridle; so that by the time his journey ended, he was so shook he could scarcely stand.

He was no sooner within the precincts of the Manor, then, throwing the reins over the neck of the beast, it proceeded of itself to the well known stable;

stable; and Stephen, gathering himself together, entered the kitchen.

Agnes rose up to inquire for the family; and Stephen fell to rubbing his hands, and uttered a sort of chuckle, between a laugh and a crow.

This mode of salutation not a little surprised her, who had not been of late used to the face of joy.

"Great news! glorious news! my girl," cried Stephen. "Where is Mr. St. Clair?"

"At the cottage, to be sure; but are you mad? what is your news?" rejoined Agnes.

"Cannot I get a sight of Miss Gertrude? but, egad, I must see somebody; for no time should be lost."

So away he strode over the hall, Agnes following close behind him, and went into the oak parlour very abruptly; when, advancing to Mrs. Byron, he uttered, "Bless you, madam! bless you! never be grieved any more!"

They all looked astonished.

"I want Mr. St. Clair," added Stephen.

Gertrude arose, seeing her mother's colour change, and advancing, said, "What ails you, Stephen? Have you been drinking?"

"Master has got the letter, Miss," replied Stephen.

"What letter? be merciful, dear Stephen! speak out."

Stephen cast his eyes round, and struck with the change in every feature, he blubbered forth, "Miss July is safe;" and ran into the hall, to dry his eyes.

Poor Mrs. Byron fell on her knees, and, with uplifted hands and eyes, remained a statue; Armenia and Gertrude clasped each other; and Annette ran out, to hear the whole story from

Stephen;

Stephen ; who stood with his face to the wall ; and when she pulled his coat, to make him speak, he only answered, " Let me alone, Miss."

St. Clair now came in, and Annette flew to him, telling him the glad tidings.

On hearing the voice, Stephen brushed off the womanish sensation ; and after two or three hemms, repeated all he knew concerning the letter his master had received.

St. Clair flew into the parlour, and caught his good mother (for so he often called her) in his arms ; then placing her in her chair, embraced them all, and called for wine. He filled a glass, and insisted on its going round, which on the present occasion was very necessary. No one interrupted him, for no one spoke.

" Why, Agnes, are you dead ?" said St. Clair. " Rouse every one : Come, madam, your lovely daughter is safe. Gertrude, my love,—Armenia,—sisters all,—cry, laugh,—do any thing but think."

" La, Sir, call in Stephen, if you please, to tell us all, for we are thunder struck," said Agnes.

" An excellent idea, my girl !"

Stephen entered, and now began, by asking fifty pardons ; but they instantly surrounded him, and broke forth all at once ; even Mrs. Byron spoke, but the clamour was too powerful for her worn-out spirits, she could not be heard.

They at length gathered, that Stephen had followed the first impulse to free them from sorrow, by setting off, without leave or advice ; and it was most probable Sir Theodore would arrive himself, very shortly, to confirm the veracity of the account.

Stephen would have retired, but Mrs. Byron detained him : She made him sit down beside her, and

and tell her again and again the expressions of his master, on reading the letter.

"When, when shall I bleſs my child? With Mr. Mandville, you fay,—incomprehensible," cried ſhe.

Scarce had ſhe uttered theſe words before the old woman delivered her a letter Roger had brought from town. It was that one Julia had written in the morning at ——.

No sooner was the well-known hand deſcried, than, dropping her head on the bosom of Gertrude, ſhe wept aloud. This amiable creature, ſuppreſſing her own emotions, broke the ſeal; but utterance was denied her; ſhe held it to St. Clair, who read it aloud.

The ſtruggle of tenderness, ſorrow, and joy was too much, and it was with diſſiculty ſupported.

As ſoon as the letter was finished, Stephen roſe up, and, cutting fifty capers, ran into the kitchen, and fell a hugging the old woman, and committing various extravagancies too abſurd for a man of his philosophy and steady refection to have been guilty of.

C H A P. XXVI.

ABOUT an hour after, Sir Theodore's chariot drove up the avenue; and the Baronet had ar ranged a plan for opening the buſineſſ, by an eaſy progreſſion; ſo as to convey the cordial in a way that

that might revive, not suffocate his patient; but he no sooner appeared, than the whole family ran out. Mrs. Byron sunk on her knees before him; and Alicia was almost stifled amongst her young friends. Joy, joy, joy, was the only intelligent word, till St. Clair, exalting his voice, welcomed the Baronet, and besought the ladies to be less vehement.

"I see, my ever dear friend," cried Sir Theodore, raising up Mrs. Byron, "some happy tidings has anticipated the delight I thought my own; but much pain is spared me, also, in the declaration. You have borne your sorrows like an angel; suffer not your joy to overwhelm you."

He led her in, and perceiving Stephen coming through the hall, the mystery dissolved.

Alicia screamed when she saw him; but Gertrude and her sisters blessed him as they passed; while Stephen held down his head, fearing the reproof of his master.

When the party were seated, a general explanation took place. The letters were read over and over again: And Julia's letter being more explicit than young Mandville's, Sir Theodore learned many events concerning his son, most interesting to him.

Alicia seemed herself again; she forgot every uneasiness that had oppressed her, and gave a loose to her former vivacity. Mrs. Byron retired very early, in spite of her efforts to support herself. When alone, her piety and affection had no restraint, and she soothed her soul to rest, paying that just tribute it so longed for.

To return to our travellers: The relenting elements now changed their course; and after three days of impatience, Mr. Watson took their paffages

ges for Holy-Head; and Julia bade farewell to a country that had afforded her so much uneasiness.

The time they had passed in Dublin was never unoccupied; as Mr. Mandville's sole study was to procure such a succession of amusements, as to defy the intrusion of a heavy hour.

He hung upon every observation made by his lovely charge, and would often rivet his eyes upon her, till her rising blushes caused him to recollect the unintentional offence.

When they were in the packet, sea-sickness so overpowered Julia, that Theodore had the delight of offering a thousand endearments, privileged alone by situation and circumstances.

He carried her to the cabin in his arms, layed her on the bed, supported her head, and press'd her cold hands between his.

When able to speak, she begged him to leave her; but as all the servants were in the same condition, he urged the necessity for his taking care of her and Mrs. Watson, who, good woman, lay very quiet, opposite to Julia, giving very little trouble to any body: Inured to the sea, she felt more inconvenience from the cold: And the Indians were all huddled together, under some watch coats, in the steerage, from whence there was no getting them to move.

Dorcas lay in a birth under her mistress, much incommoded; and indeed Mr. Mandville had chosen the post, where his services were as useful to others, as delightful to himself.

Fifteen hours landed them safely at the Head, and early in the morning they set out for Bellé pont.

Can I describe the sensations of Julia; at every mile her palpitations increased.

She wanted to persuade Mrs. Watson, to go immediately

mediately to Orwell Manor; but Theodore so vigorously opposed it, that she forbore to urge any further; 'twas night e'er they reached Bellefont, and as they drove round the court yard, to alight, she felt so sick, that Mrs. Watson dreaded her fainting.

Theodore, whose own sensations were as highly elevated, on the point of meeting his father and sister, could not forbear his ecstacy, but putting his arm round her waist, pressed her to him, and gently whispered:

"Oh Julia! recall your scattered spirits, to meet such a father."

He could not have used a speedier means to restore her.

Julia's imagination took umbrage at the seeming freedom of young Theodore; and she descended the step of the carriage, piqued at his behaviour.

Theodore took one of Mrs. Watson's hands and one of Julia's, conducting them into the house, when a servant very respectfully informed him Sir Theodore and their Lady was at Orwell Manor; but Lucy appearing, flew to Julia, "Dear, dear madam! is it you?" she cried: every servant in the house ranged themselves in an instant in the hall, humbly offering their congratulations; but when they learned it was Mr. Theodore Mandville, who was also present, they seemed at a loss for a method to convey their sentiments: Some fell to scrapes and bows,—some threw the apartments open,—some flew to the village, to set the ringers to work,—and some stood looking, with fixed attention on the charming couple; at last Theodore asked if there was no letter left for him; upon which they all started at once, to bring that which surprise had put out of their memory.

In the interim the party entered the saloon, where other servants were serving proper refreshments.

Julia was dumb, 'till Theodore had read the letter, which he did aloud. The purport was begging that they might, on receiving it, immediately repair to the Manor.

"Now let us go," cried Julia.

Theodore looked at Mrs. Watson, who was much fatigued. "Can you proceed to-night, madam?"

Julia answered, "I see, my dear friend, repose is absolutely necessary to you; and it is your kindness for me, that now causes a demur in your thoughts; suffer me to go on with my woman; no danger can befall me; and if you who are already weary, persist in accompanying me, the consequences might be such as to embitter all my promised delights.

C H A P. XXVII.

MRS. WATSON, as I before observed, had felt the cold severely; and the precipitation of their journey, getting into damp carriages, and changing so often, had produced a feverish sensation, that alarmed her, though she kept it to herself.

She replied to her fair friend, "Why will you urge yourself; my dear, your own perturbed spirits want some repose: If you set off directly, you will

will only disturb the family, and perhaps affect them too much by your unexpected appearance."

"I must interrupt you this once, my good madam: You will not detain me, when I assure you, that was I obliged to walk barefooted and alone, I would see my long-lost friends before I sleep."

Theodore, much affected with her energy, rang the bell, and ordered in the housekeeper, to see every thing prepared to accommodate his guests; shook Mr. Watson by the hand, and prayed his excuses till the next day; when he said he would return; but Mr. Watson rejoined, "If my wife is better, we shall make Orwell Manor in our road to London to-morrow."

Julia was occupied during these moments, in acknowledgments to her friend, who sincerely regretted her not being able to present, with her own hand, her adopted ward to her fond mother.

Theodore now offered to conduct her to the carriage.

"Sure you don't mean to accompany me, Mr. Mandville," said Julia, gravely, withdrawing her hand.

Theodore was petrified at her manner, and stood silent some moments, at length he rejoined, "However disagreeable my company may be to you, Miss Gordon, you will not refuse me a conveyance, to meet my father, I think."

Julia felt convicted of cruelty and ingratitude; she offered him again her hand, and tears dropped on his, as he put her into the chaise.

Let no one accuse my heroine of coquetry; she held it as despicable as any other species of deceit; but she had observed a warmth in Mr. Mandville's behaviour of late, which she thought it proper to check in her unprotected situation. For some time past he had made it doubly necessary to ob-

serve a retired conduct; and any intrusion upon that was very painful to the delicacy of her mind.

She confessed to herself, no man had ever appeared so amiable,—so elegant,—so attracting in her eyes; but was she warranted to bestow her heart? Had her mother, or Sir Theodore sanctioned it? Might he not already have engaged his affections? It was very unlikely one, so every way formed to please, should not have met his counterpart before.

How blameable, then, must she be, to encourage an attachment in herself, or favour the appearance of it in him, without being certain of a proper foundation for either.

Theodore, not being so much in the secret as we are, felt very much hurt at the repulsive manner of Julia; and though he was softened by her subsequent conduct, it struck him in this light, that in himself he was disagreeable to her, but that gratitude had risen up to reproach her for unkindness, and to that impulse he conceived he owed the relenting offering she had seemed to make on his putting her into the chaise.

He continued very grave during the journey; and Julia did not interrupt him, being then wholly occupied with her friends.

When they came to the village, the postillion stopped for orders. The clock struck three, and the moon shone upon the top of the Manor.

Julia clasped her hands, and pointed to the avenue. Theodore gently placed his outside of them.

"I too have a father," said he, sighing; "but you allow no tender sentiment in others: They are all your own, and all confined to the Manor."

"Unjust Theodore!" cried Julia.

"Divine Julia!" added he, in ecstacy, for she had been always accustomed to apostrophise a Mr. The

The chaise stopped ; the servant sounded the bell ; poor Julia's heart how it beat !

"Who is there ?" cried Stephen.

"Open the door for pity's sake !" said Julia, springing out, and nimbly evading Theodore, she passed Stephen, and flew up stairs ; entering her mother's room, fell into her arms.

The bell had awakened the family ; and Mrs. Byron had got out of bed (having duly prepared her mind, through the night, to see her daughter soon) and throwing a loose gown over her, called to her children ; but before they could assemble, Julia was wrapped in her mother's bosom, where her delighted sisters found her.

She clung round her mother some minutes, without raising her head, then bursting into tears, turned to Gertrude, and then gave each the fondest proofs of love.

Here let me leave them to that perfection of sentiment too highly felt for description, and return to the hall ; where Stephen, without shoes, stockings, or coat, stood in his striped cotton night cap, holding the door.

Julia had rushed by him with such velocity, that he began to recall his notions of hobgoblins, and turning round very quickly, to see what came next, he perceived his young master. He instantly sent forth a cry not very unlike a howl ; and falling before him, in a sort of ecstasy, clasped round his knees, then starting from his position, he sprang forward to the stair-case, beckoning Theodore to follow him ; but was soon stopped by the Baronet, who, collecting from the various noises, that his son was arrived, had thrown his robe de chambre over him, and descended to embrace him.

No son was ever dearer to a father,—no father more

more respected by a son ; they met like men of soul ; no stoic chillness stunned the feelings of nature.

Stephen stood aghast in admiration, till hearing a scream, he saw Alicia flying down stairs, for whom he instantly made way, and recollecting, that as this was a moon light scene, it would be quite as well to procure candles. He strided hastily through the hall, and ran against poor Dorcas ; who stood in the most awkward situation imaginable, not knowing where to bestow herself.

As he had not before observed her, he could not at all conceive what her occupation might be, and demanded what she wanted amongst all this happiness ?

Dorcas said she was Miss Julia's maid.

" Then, my love, I will call Agnes to you," said Stephen, and went out for lights.

Alicia almost stifled her brother ; her tears fell so fast, and her arms clung round his neck so that he was obliged to fairly lift her up.

As soon as the candles appeared, they went into the parlour ; and it was with difficulty Alicia was kept from fainting. As she knew no bounds to the quickness of her sensations, so they often overpowered her. Stephen called to Dorcas, by the appellation of young woman, who came in immediately, and offered some salts, and shewed every solicitude for the recovery of the Lady. Stephen cut a caper, and went up to the old woman, who he politely pulled out of bed, and bid her seek Agnes directly, for there was company below.

Agnes was bathing the hands of the fair Julia, with drops of genuine balsam, who in return kissed her forehead affectionately, when the entrance of old Betty announced to her she was wanted.

They

They all at once recollect ed, that young Mr. Mandville was below ; and Gertrude, throwing a long muslin cloak over her dishabille, soon entered the oak parlour ; where, in the most polite and affectionate manner, she embraced Theodore, calling him the deliverer of Julia.

" Oh heavens," cried Alicia, " am I awake ? Let me go to her ! "

" You shall be a housewife of your pleasures for this once, my dear, said Miss Gordon ; " to-morrow we will meet at breakfast. Julia is much agitated, and I have persuaded her to lay down by my mother. You shall retire with me ; and Mr. Mandville will find no objection to sleeping in your bed, after taking some refreshment."

" And this good-natured girl," cried Alicia, turning to Dorcas, " who must she belong to ? "

Gertrude looked, and Mr. Mandville, with his usual benevolence, said she had been the attendant and companion of Julia, through all her misfortunes.

Poor Dorcas blushed, but Miss Gordon added, " A welcome guest, whoever thou art."

Then taking the stranger's hand, the ladies retired ; and the gentlemen agreed to defer their mutual desire of inquiry till the morning. Stephen served as groom of the chambers ; and the party went to court repose, which had winged her way far off, but by long solicitation was woo'd back, and did not depart again till eleven the next day.

C H A P. XXVIII.

ST. CLAIR had waited two hours in the breakfast room before any one appeared, except Mr. Stephen, who most faithfully recounted the events of the last night.

St. Clair waited with the utmost impatience to meet the long-lost Julia, and his friend, Theodore. At length a thought struck him, and he applied manfully to the dinner bell, which soon brought all the family together,—and another joyful meeting took place.

Can I repeat all that passed between Sir Theodore and Julia? my boundary is too limited. Shall I repeat all St. Clair said to young Mandville on his return to England? No; you are tired of congratulations. So what passed in the breakfast conversation shall be left to your sanguine ideas; and as they all spoke at once, I believe myself inadequate to the separating, their several speeches, even were you, lovely readers, desirous to have them.

No body could bear to absent themselves during this day, so the toilette rested undisturbed. They neither walked, rode, played, sung, nor danced; but remained in the oak parlour, recounting their several adventures.

The Baronet was more and more astonished at the unusual artifice and cautious proceedings of Charles Wentworth; and how to proceed without giving uneasiness to Lord Orwell, was a matter of much speculation. It was at last determined to

fend

send for Captain Gordon; and if he could procure leave of absence from his regiment, to refer this affair to his determination.

In the mean time Sir Theodore invited the whole family to pass one month, in honour of the return of his son at BellePont; and appointed George Gordon to make that his rendezvous, where all parties were soon to be assembled.

Mrs. Byron was more easily prevailed on to go, as she could not bear to part from Julia: And the second day after, was appointed for their departure. The intervening one was, at the invitation of St. Clair, passed at the cottage, which was scarce large enough to contain his company.

It was a thatched mansion, disposed into four apartments. The first a hall and kitchen; both or either; for it was the same room; within it a parlour, one side of which was lined with books, the other hung with plain green paper, bordered with white; a chintz curtain (once his coverlid) drew up in festoons round the window; and eight green garden chairs with cushions, and covers like the curtain, made up the furniture of this apartment. -The tables were only admitted when in use, in order to give room to move about. Two bed chambers above stairs; the one for the master, the other for Caesar, gives you the whole of this dwelling.

It stood in the garden; in the front of which, under one small brick arch, ran a pure stream over the pebbles, whose clearness and rippling, added to the simplicity of the scene.

In this cottage was passed one of the most delightful days imagination can paint. It was,

"The feast of reason, and the flow of soul."

And in this day did Theodore Mandville feel

his fate depend on Julia. Her constrained behaviour was no longer necessary,—her mind was doubly animated, from the delights it experienced: She *was* all sweetness, beauty, truth.

Sir Theodore soon perceived the effects of her charms on his son, and saw it with pleasure; and the appellation he had sometimes used to give Julia, of daughter, was now more frequently applied than ever.

Mrs. Byron also saw and *thought*; but determined, at present, nothing on her part should interrupt the happiness so generally experienced, resolving at a future and more proper season, to apprise Sir Theodore of her suggestions; that no hidden transaction might cause her to arraign her own conduct, which hitherto had always been open and undefining.

The next day the whole party set out for Bellepont; some on horseback, some in the phæton (which came over with the coach, and had been made purposely, as a present to young Mr. Mandville) and some in the chariot, which was before at the Manor; and after enjoying a most pleasant journey, arrived at Bellepont, where they found Mrs. Watson, who was recovering from a serious attack, and much delighted to be introduced to the friends of her admired Julia.

Mrs. Byron very gratefully acknowledged the obligations she felt herself under to this good Lady, and a strict friendship commenced between them; equally pleased with each other.

Sir Theodore most heartily pressed Mr. and Mrs. Watson to remain with him, and join the general festival prepared for his son; but as the Lady was much better, her anxiety to see her children, prevented their availing themselves of his polite request; and the next morning they left

left Bellepont, after giving a promise to divide the next summer between Orwell Manor and that place.

Sir Theodore was so pleased with the situation of his seat, and so taken up with making improvements, (till blighted by the chagrin, which of late had enveloped him) that his thoughts had never once turned to London; though he kept up a constant correspondence with his old acquaintances there; particularly Lord Orwell, who often deplored his ignorance of the residence of his son Charles, who he encouraged himself to suppose, had quitted Chantilly, to join his elder brother at Rome.

Sir Theodore also sometimes heard from Lord John Raymond, who had journeyed southward to Montpelier.

He still mentioned Julia with rapture; but the Baronet was pleased to see, by the tenor of his latest letters, that his vivacity was returning, and that he again mingled with polite circles, in the general amusements of the place.

Alicia, too, often heard from Lady Duncairn; and Lady Middleton failed not to join her in every good wish for returning happiness to Mrs. Byron and her charming daughters.

C H A P. XXIX.

EVERY thing was in motion to promote the celebration of Theodore's return : Balls, feasts, and concerts were appointed, and invitations given for ten miles round the country : Oxen and other meat offerings were to be sacrificed whole, on the altar of charity, and libations of strong ale and cyder poured down the throats of those that cried, long live king George and Mr. Theodore.

Amidst all this joy, it was to be observed, Mr. Mandville was often thoughtful. He would retire to a corner of the room, if Julia danced, and fixing his eyes on her, became a statue.

St. Clair was the first that perceived this sudden change, in his friend ; and would often rouse him from the fit of absence.

A deep sigh was always the sign of his recollection, after an effort too visible, and he would join the throng, solicit the next dance with Julia, and become himself again.

The arrival of Captain Gordon gave an additional charm to some of this society. Indeed I may say to all.

He was so perfectly happy to see his cousin Julia restored, added to some other hidden causes for joy, that he was more than usually unreserved ; and taking the privilege of a relation, he held the hand of Julia very often, sat beside her, and whispered in her ear.

It

It is certain this generally happened when Miss Mandville was next to her ; and one might have misconstrued it into a means of approaching *that* Lady, who seemed to bear a good share in their secrets : But Mr. Mandville saw otherwise ; he could not endure these select parties, and walked about the room on thorns,—often retired,—and would, at that season of the year, with every apartment full of joy, seek a recess in the shrubbery, and there remain till such time as he could subdue his sensations.

St. Clair, who was himself no very happy lover, watched all his motions, and sometimes followed him, in purest sympathy and friendship. He at length determined to find an opportunity of unbosoming his own distress, and seek a mutual confidence from Theodore ; hoping, either by advice or participation of his griefs, to soften the uneasy sensations that preyed upon him.

Julia herself soon perceived the strangeness of his conduct, and not understanding it, became unhappy ; and when these fits of sullenness appeared, she would go to Mr. Mandville, and ask if he was ill, with such an anxious look, that melted him ; and when absent in his lonely walk, she watched for his return ; and seeing him enter, cold and pale, she would again address him :—
“ Theodore, your head aches ; why will you dance ? I am sure you hate it ; let us go to cards ; come, George, we want you in our party.”

Theodore would take her hand, to lead her to a table ; but his disgust arose so strongly at the Captain, as almost to deprive him of his usual urbanity ; and it did not fail very soon to become visible to the soldier, who, conceiving it to spring

from

from another cause (as perceiving his love to his sister) determined, in that instant, to pursue a plan long in his meditation.

George Gordon loved Alicia with an ardour natural to one of his impatient disposition: The forms and ceremonies attending on parents, lawyers, and settlements, were always hateful to him. He would often say, *his* lawyers should go to that occupation when he was ordered for the first campaign after his marriage; and then the Lady might amuse herself with giving them instructions her own way.

He certainly then could ill brook the idea of cringing for the approbation of a brother, who already hated him, and would, no doubt, influence Sir Theodore in the disposal of his daughter.

That his judgment was erroneous in this case, we, reader, could prove; for Theodore hated not the man, it was the rival; and if every one in the party had acted with their usual candour, much uneasiness would have been spared: But Theodore had a secret enemy within,—an asp, a viper, or a vulture; be it what it may, it preyed upon his noble heart, and scared its faculties.

Captain Gordon, taking matters in the point of view before-mentioned, now sought an opportunity to speak to Miss Mandville, without witnesses; no very easy thing brought about, surrounded as she was by her young friends.

In the course of the next morning's ride, he contrived to tell her he had something to communicate to her alone; and besought her for his peace, as well as her own, to grant him an interview.

Alarmed

Alarmed at the earnestness of his manner, she loitered out of hearing of her companions, long enough to inquire why their mutual peace should be at stake, if she denied his request.

"I must quit Bellefont, if you refuse me," answered Mr. Gordon. "This is no time or place for explanation! Trust my honour, Alicia! meet me at the Reed House in the evening. Bring Lucy, if you doubt me. I must speak to you, or leave you for ever."

Alicia turned pale; mystery was a frightful masked enemy, she dreaded; unused to cope with her, a thousand doubts arose. She remained silent.

"You don't answer me, Miss Mandville; I am indifferent to you: Be assured, if I had not the strongest motives for urging my request, your coldness would make me give it up. Say, only say, I am impertinent, I will confess my hopes have been presumptuous. I do confess my own unworthiness; I must either banish myself for ever from you, or explain myself at full."

"I will meet you, Mr. Gordon, at seven o'clock, and by that very act, merit your disapprobation.

"Say, upon your honour," added George; "otherwise you will recant."

"You convince me more and more of the impropriety of my compliance, by your dread of giving me time to reflect; but I will meet you, though I declare, I will inform my father of the whole of the transaction to-morrow morning."

"You are an angel, Alicia, but I will try to deserve your goodness," rejoined the soldier, (taking no thought for to-morrow.) "At seven in the evening, at the Reed House."

"At

"At seven," replied Alicia, whipping up her horse.

C H A P. XXX.

NO one seemed to be sensible of their delay, for Theodore was repeating some pathetic lines to Julia, from a fragment he said he had met with in his travels ; and Gertrude and St. Clair were animadverting on the follies of the world, pursuing happiness through splendor and dissipation, when it was no where to be found, but in the sober cottage, with a moderate competency.

Alicia could not help before observing, the very cold aspect her brother bore to the soldier ; and why he should put on an air of constraint to him, more than to any other of the visitors, surprised her : but for the present, she quitted all observation ; her thoughts retired to consider her own affairs ; and the pensive, so uncharacteristic of Miss Mandville, was the style of her portrait at this sitting.

At dinner she complained of the head-ach ; it was a real head-ach ; (not such a one as is assumed when we plead an excuse from unpleasant company) but anxiety of mind, and impropriety of conduct, agreed not with the opened hearted sufferer. Her eyes were heavy, and she seemed oppressed.

Mrs.

Mrs. Byron (who knew there was to be an assembly in the evening) advised her to take some volatiles, and lay down a little; and Captain Gordon was very urgent that she should endeavour to relieve her pain, fearful he might have been the cause of it.

She consented at last to retire, and Gertrude went with her; she no sooner entered her chamber, than throwing her arms round her friend's neck, Alicia burst into tears. Miss Gordon, alarmed at such a burst of sorrow, demanded the cause of this unusual sadness; but Miss Mandville smiled through the shower, and told her, to-morrow she should know all. She begged her to leave her for the present, which Gertrude was unwilling to do; but she rung for Lucy, and desiring her friend to say nothing of her disorder, promised to return to the company before supper.

Gertrude joined the party below, full of conjectures, and fixing her eyes upon George Gordon's, tried to unravel the enigma, from what she could collect from them.

So penetrating was this inquisition, that he almost doubted the fidelity of his mistress, in keeping a secret, but avoided Gertrude's singling him out, for fear of her attempting to dissuade him from insisting on the meeting.

Mr. Gordon had been employed, with the assistance of John, from the time they came back from riding, until the hour of dinner, and had scarce left a spare moment for the toilette. At that season of the year, the hour of seven is somewhat a late one, to retire to the comforts of a Reed house; but the moon, in complaisance to our lover, threw a double share of light upon the terrace, and twinkled through the branches, as if

half

half inclined to peep. Chaste as thyself, fair Dian, is the nymph you blink at ; light her in full resplendence to her expecting swain, and ratify their faithful vows.

Miss Mandville heard the clock ; she sighed, “ Follow me, Lucy,” she cried ; Lucy obeyed ; she went down the servants staircase, through the offices, into the garden, crossed it—into the shrubbery, from that, into the more extensive pleasure grounds ; passed the canal, and came to the terrace, where Captain Gordon had paraded a full half hour before his time. He joined them immediately, but was prevented from pouring out his warm acknowledgments, by Lucy, who could not account for the before-mentioned proceedings of her lady, and who began to wish herself out of a plot she had been drawn into, without either having the honour, or pleasure of being made a confidant. Awed into respect, however, she followed them ; when seated, Miss Mandville desired Mr. Gordon to explain those mysterious sentences he uttered in the morning.

The soulder was not wanting in those necessary prologues, which pave the way to the point of their wishes ; and after a long detail of sufferings, fidelity, and never ending love, had softened the charmer into pity, he began with the terrific, and declared he would not suffer another day, the frozen and disgusting treatment of her brother ; that nothing but affection for her, could so long have subdued his boiling spirit.

He saw the power of young Theodore with the Baronet : in short, he must either call him to an account, or leave her for ever.

Here he had occasion for all his powers, to pacify her ; she wept so loud, that he feared their being discovered. Alicia laid her head on the bosom

bosom of Lucy ; the soldier, on one knee before her, breathed out his proposal on her passive hand.

" Go with me to Scotland, life of my life," added he, " put it out of the power of your brother, to destroy your husband ; or him (who will glory in that title) to aim at the destruction of an only son : son to my friend, brother to my love ! horror ! save me, Alicia, save us all ?" this is the moment ; a carriage waits without the wall !"

" To-morrow morning I swear !"

" Oh swear nothing !" cried Alicia, " you do not know my brother, my father ; they will consent."

" Never, Alicia ; nor could I solicit it, were treasures, if possible more dear than yourself, to await the event.

" My soul brooks not disdain ; I have told you already what would be the result ; do not look on that picture of horror again, but let me convey you to scenes of delight ; Lucy shall go with you, and I will travel in another carriage, 'till united to you by every tie of heaven and earth. I will then bring you back, and join in prayer at the knees of Sir Theodore, with you for pardon. Say, will you go ? if not, farewell for ever."

Lucy began to cry, " Pray madam let us go ? I could break my heart to hear you speak so, Sir. Take one arm, Sir, and I will take the other." So saying, she half lifted her lady ; but the soldier seizing the happy moment, took her in his arms, and carrying her to where John and the carriages were in waiting, placed his lovely burthen and her Abigail in the foremost chaise, and getting into the other himself, they drove off as fast as four horses could gallop.

I will

I will not take upon me to describe the feelings of Alicia, because astonishment and surprise alone were apparent: various, no doubt, was the conflict between love and duty.

A relay of horses stood ready harnessed, to put in at the end of the first stage, and they had gone two and forty miles, before they stopped long enough to have any conversation.

Mr. Gordon now got out, to solicit Alicia to take some refreshment, who, as Lucy informed him, had done nothing but weep all the way. He was not wanting, in every argument, to assuage her distress, entreating her not to embitter the blessing she conferred by regret.

"I cannot regret the means that will unite us." returned the candid mourner, "but for pity's sake, send back your man; let him say to my father, that he saw my contrition; let him take this handkerchief, steeped in my tears! let him say I solicit his pardon, which if he denies, never will Alicia take comfort again."

Capt. Gordon ordered John to attend, and Miss Mandville enforcing her desires by a private donation, he returned, on a fresh horse, to Bellepont, with a design of punctually fulfilling her every command, and the lovers set forward as before, only with this difference, Miss Mandville grew composed, and felt much relieved by being indulged in this first instance of returning duty, which the affection and good nature of Mr. Gordon had allowed her to perform.

As we cannot hasten their journey, every expedient being before suggested by the lover, we shall go to Bellepont, where a brilliant circle had assembled for the evening. Dancing, cards and conversation, were the choice of separate tastes, and an elegant supper at twelve, called them from their

their

their various amusements, to partake of the genial feast.

Gertrude, very much surprized at her friend's long absence, had been at her chamber door, but listening, and finding all silent, supposed she was asleep; she soon after missed her relation, and thought it was some hours since he had come across her; but, as in these kind of meetings, those matters may arrive, she, without intimating her design, traversed the three apartments set forth for company, but met not the object she pursued.

She then returned to Miss Mandville's room, and gently turned the lock; it made no resistance; there was no light in the chamber; however, she called; no answer was returned; she then drew the door as wide as to receive some light from the hanging lamp in and gallery; the bed was smooth, and Lucy's work lay on the table.

Miss Gordon now rung the bell, and taking the candle from the servant, (outside the room) she again entered, and searched if any clue could be found to account for her absence; on going out of the chamber, she desired Lucy might be sent up, but the maid returned, and said Miss Lucy had not been down stairs since the afternoon.

"No matter, I believe she is in my chamber; I will find her myself," rejoined the collected Gertrude, and moving towards that apartment, sat down to recollect what was to be done. She remained not more than five minutes, but going back to the company, she spoke apart to her mother, who retired with her, and soon conceived her doubts to be too well founded.

Their fears were, that Sir Theodore would discover the affair before the company would separate: they concluded it would be better if that could

could be avoided ; and yet, he might imagine Mrs. Byron was in the secret. She felt herself in the most awkward predicament, and knew not what part to take ; when the Baronet opened the door of the little parlour where they were sitting, and asked if they had been up with Alicia ? and if she was better ?

Neither of the ladies seemed disposed to answer ; neither knowing what to say.

Sir Theodore, alarmed for the health of his beloved Alicia, impatiently cried out,

“ Where is my child ? what ails her ? ”

Mrs. Byron hastily shut the door, and immediately declared all she knew, and all she suspected in regard to her kinsman, which was corroborated by Gertrude.

“ Ungrateful ! cruel girl ! how hast thou forgot thyself ? ” said the Baronet.

The ladies took each an hand, and endeavoured to sooth his ruffled mind.

“ Have ever I controvuled her ? ” continued he, “ did your nephew ever propose himself to me ? did I behave to him, so as to prevent his appeal to me ? oh, bad ! bad ! my son will think this a stain on my family ; he will pursue them, and his wife, and her good name, perhaps, be the forfeit.” He struck his own forehead, and then dropped into a chair in an agony.

“ Compose yourself, dear sir,” cried Gertrude, “ and do not speak to Mr. Mandville to night ; to-morrow, perhaps, may set things in another light. If you wish for inquiry or pursuit, suffer St. Clair to take your orders ; you know you can depend on him.”

“ My sweet young friend,” cried the Baronet, “ I will take your counsel ; but I will go to the library ; send him to me there, and tell Theodore I am

I am gone to bed, and he must do the honours of the house."

He arose, and Mrs. Byron went with him to the library, while Gertrude sought out her lover, and sent him to do every kind office in his power, to one whose delight was to do good to all mankind.

Theodore received the message from his father; and as he often retired early, he was not surprised, but continued his polite attentions to every one; and his particular assiduities to Julia, so much so, that every one in the company looked forward, in a short time, for a renewal of festivals, at the celebration of their marriage.

As soon as St. Clair came into the library, the distressed farther poured his sorrows forth, and, stung by the injury and affront, a consultation followed, upon the most proper mode of acting on so distressing an occasion.

Sir Theodore confessed he had not the smallest objection to Captain Gordon, neither did he think any could have been made, except in point of fortune, had he applied in a public manner, as the suitor to his daughter; but this action of seducing her from her friends, and causing her to act with mystery and deception, rendered him a very unfit protector in future, to a woman that could be led so easily away.

St. Clair very ardently took up the cause of the fugitives, pleading the humility of the Captain, as the reason of his fault; not supposing it possible to obtain the consent of Sir Theodore, to unite his daughter with one who had nothing but honour and probity to offer as a settlement.

Mrs. Byron sat by, very uneasy; she seldom spoke, and her mind was in great agitation: she already saw, in her idea, another elopement; not that

that she had a doubt of her daughter; but if Alicia could be subdued, Julia also might be vulnerable.

C H A P. XXXI.

AT length, not being able to conquer her presentiment, she addressed the Baronet as follows :

" Shall I, who ought to pour oil into the wound of my insestimate friend, corrode it still more; and yet, perhaps, this is the only moment of prevention. My nephew has robbed you of your daughter; take care of your son; we will leave you to-morrow; Julia's heart had never felt an impression; but gratitude, and Theodore, may have engraven an image there, we ought to demolish."

" You shall not go, Mrs. Byron; I see, with pleasure, an attachment, which I trust will be permanent," rejoined the Baronet; " it is balm to my wound, withdraw it not."

Poor Mrs. Byron ran out of the room, to give vent to sensations, she could not repress, overcome by contending feeling of mingled joy and gratitude.

Between three and four in the morning the company withdrew, and at the same time John rode into the court yard, half dead with fatigue. After putting the horse into the stable, he entered the house; he was astonished that none of the servants

servants questioned him concerning Miss Mandville, and indeed felt himself not a little mortified, (being swelled with importance) that not one interrogation should afford him the pleasure of saying he never divulged secrets.

The truth was, nothing had transpired concerning the elopement, further than to the parties already named, so John had it all to tell, though he knew not what pleasure lay in store for him.

He asked for Sir Theodore, of one who was to be spoken with, out of the bustle of getting up carriages, who answered, he was gone to bed.

"But I *must* see him," cried John.

"*You must* see him," cried the other, "why you are as drunk as the rest; you have been lying in the stable, look at your dirt; go, go along, and get sober."

"I will sober you, fellow," quoth John, in wrath, "but I respect the house." This last was spoken consequentially, and just at the moment when St. Clair was crossing the hall, to seek out Gertrude.

"John, is it you?" said he, "where is your master?"

"Please you, sir, I never divulge secrets; but I want to See Sir Theodore.—I have business for his private ear."

"Come with me directly, then," answered St. Clair, and conducted him to the presence of his astonished friend.

John bowed low, confessed he was but a servant, and must do as he was bid, or he would not have abetted the flight of Miss Mandville; but the tears and expressions of that young lady, for the offence she had committed, had so melted his heart, that he had, by her orders, run the risk of

meeting the rage of the family, by appearing before them to declare, she never should taste of comfort, if Sir Theodore was angry, and had brought her handkerchief (steep'd when given to him in her tears) as a token of her sorrow for her disobedience.

John having acquitted himself faithfully, stood silent, while Sir Theodore took the handkerchief, put it to his eyes, and then into his bosom. He motioned to John to withdraw, who seemed glad matters were no worse, and descended with all imaginable speed to the kitchen, where his oratorial powers set forth the surprising history of a young lady, who ran away with a handsome soldier; and how the footman made himself a very useful assistant, and thereby his future fortune was as good as made.

Stephen, who never went to bed until he heard his master's bell, generally nap'd away the evening in his chair; but hearing the vociferous declamation of his old acquaintance, started up, and having only heard in part, cried,

“Who is run away?”

“Why, your young lady with my master.”

“I say you lie,” answered Stephen, gruffly, “I once taught you manners before, so take care of the second part.”

“Upon my honour, Mr. Stephen, I myself went some miles with——”

“Upon your honour,” rejoined the other, “then you yourself are a rascal, to come a babbling in this here kitchen, and use my lady's name among a parcel of young jackanapes like yourself; if I find thee a chattering at my return, I will crack all your small bones between my teeth: but I will know the truth from Mr. St. Clair.” So saying, he left the cabal, and having received a satisfactory

tory answer from that gentleman, that every thing was perfectly to the honour of the family, he went up to stir his master's fire, and fell asleep in the window.

It did not require a double sight to perceive, that the Baronet's anger had evaporated, either by door, chimney, or window, from the charm conveyed in the handkerchief; for after the short ejaculation of, "May they be happy," he begged St. Clair to break the affair to his son as easily as possibly; retired to his chamber, where, dismissing Stephen, we will leave him, to pay that grateful tribute, no truly wise man can deny.

After a few hours sleep, St. Clair proceeded to Mr. Mandville's room, who was not yet risen.

"You are an early visitor, my friend," said he, "do you bring me good tidings? are you reinstated in your office? or is your old uncle dead?"

"Neither," rejoined his friend, "but I bring you tidings."

"You are grave, St. Clair?" resumed Theodore, "and he rose upon his elbow, "is Julia well?"

"Julia is well; but an elopement has taken place to night, which I fear your temper will not bear."

"Is Gordon gone?"

"He is, to Scotland." Theodore started up, and hastily laying hold of his cloaths, rung the bell with violence.

"What are you about, Mandville?" said St. Clair.

"I will pursue them," rejoined the other.

"To what purpose?" they are a hundred miles beyond you," added the former.

"No matter, I may prevent it even at the

altar; I will stretch my body bleeding between them," rejoined Theodore.

"Are you mad? your bleeding body?" continued his friend, "I would have pursued them at all risk, but Sir Theodore is satisfied."

"Sir Theodore loves her not like me," answered the lover; "oh, St. Clair, I have been my own destroyer! why did I not own my situation? a thousand times have I been on the point of reposing my secret in your faithful bosom."

The servant appearing, stopped him, but turning with unusual fierceness to the man,

"Get ready my horses instantly," said he, "do not stay to answer!"

"Again I must, and will detain you," said St. Clair!

"No earthly power shall do that; not even my father," rejoined Theodore.

"Then I will go with you, for your poor sister's sake."

"My sister is happy, but I, I am a wretch! O Julia!"

"Will you only speak with her before you rush on your mad attempt?"

"Speak to her! am I not on wing to speak to her? but she is lost!"

"Lost! surely you dream? I met her coming from her chamber just now."

"Am I awake indeed? how have you tortured me? did you not say Julia had eloped with Gordon?"

"I would have said your sister, but your impatience stopped me."

"My sister! Alicia Mandville gone to Scotland —to marry George Gordon—he is a fine fellow, and I honour him for his spirit."

William the horses were ready.

"You

" You may put them up, William, I shall not ride this morning," said Mr. Mandville.

" I have often thought of late, from your unaccountable conduct, that some hidden uneasiness preyed on your mind," continued St. Clair, " and waited, when these days of dissipation should pass away, that I might draw the cause from you. I am now more convinced than ever, of the necessity of an explanation, for as you love Julia, and I can vouch for the approbation of your father, some obstacle that you will not name, prevents your happiness."

Theodore, who had sat in a musing posture during this speech, now replied,

" As we cannot, for some days, mix as usual with the world, on account of this flight, I will prepare my mind to bear the harrow of recollection, and give you all my embarrassments, in order to be repaired by your better judgment and advice."

" For the present," continued he, " let us join the family at breakfast, that my eyes may realize my happiness, and offer my excuses for poor Alicia, to my angry father."

" I told you before, Sir Theodore is satisfied," replied St. Clair.

" Why, then compliments on the occasion will be necessary, so come along."

They entered the parlour; Theodore's eyes were rivetted on Julia, as if he doubted them; she, in her turn, blushed exceedingly, and played with a ring that encircled her fore finger, not easily affixing a cause for his particular stare. Sir Theodore's entrance put an end to the embarrassment, who accosted his son, by asking him, " If he felt disposed to admit a new relation into the family?"

" I have always been disposed, my dear sir, to see Alicia happy; and though I should have been better

better pleased, had she gone through those duties you had a right to expect from her; yet, as it is her first, so I think it will be her last offence; and I most heartily wish her and you, and all of us, joy, from the beginning to the end of this business."

Sir Theodore shook him by the hand, and added,

"I don't care how soon *you* give a new relation to us, Mr. Mandville."

Theodore looked confused, and Julia saw something pass by, that called her immediately to the window.

The Baronet was much pleased to find his son so little irritated, as (from an ardency of disposition) he thought it likely some tendency to revenge the affront, might have suggested itself on the occasion; but there are as many wheels, and secret springs, in the mechanism of man, as in any other time piece; one of those had been touched by jealousy in our hero; set the mind in motion, and after being wound up, let itself down by the means of conviction, on seeing his mistress still within his reach.

Letters were now brought into the parlour, one of which being sealed with the Orwell arms, and directed to Captain Gordon, Sir Theodore made no doubt that it contained an answer to one written by that gentleman to his Lordship, wherein he had submitted their joint opinions to his determination, after giving the fullest account of Mr. Wentworth's proceedings.

Every one longed to get at the contents, but none chose to take the liberty, so it was lodged in the library, 'till the return of the Captain.

Sir Theodore now opened his packet, and after giving

giving it a perusal, requested the attention of the company.

" This, Julia, is a letter from your rejected lover, Lord J. Raymond, who tells me, that fifteen days ago he led to the altar, the charming Marquise de Chateauneuf, a widow of two and twenty, whose strong resemblance to you, was his first motive for loving her; she had struck him at Montpelier, where, for the recovery of her health (sacrificed in attentions to a morose old husband) she remained some time—afterwards at Paris, both in a state of convalescence, they renewed their acquaintance, and as the best consolation for all disappointments, he had made a tender of a stricken heart, and left it to the powers of her vivacity, and unfeigned affection, to heal the wound.

" The conclusion adds her property to be five thousand pounds a year."

" I am heartily glad of it," said the Baronet, " he deserved to be happy; did he not, my dear?"

Julia coloured, and said, " certainly."

Theodore's intelligent eyes said a great deal on the occasion, but his tongue was silent, not willing to add to the agitation, already too visible in his charmer.

Mrs. Byron gave a change to the conversation, in order to relieve her daughter, by observing the salutary effects of mineral waters in general, and recounted many wonderful cures in the course of her own knowledge; this became the general topic, and general topics are the certain means of breaking up parties; people deal out what they have said a thousand times before, uninterested in the observation, and fall to planning either a walk, a ride, to read or write, or play, or any thing to get off the insipidity of the conversation; so it happened with our friends.

Sir

Sir Theodore had some very fine prints just come down, which he wished the ladies to view, and arrange the disposal of; and Theodore and St. Clair proposed visiting the extent of the park, and taking a more minute account of the many beautiful objects, too cursorily seen in their morning scampers over the country. The ladies repaired to the Baronet's dressing room, and the gentlemen to their walk.

Scarce had Armenia advanced to the window, (which, next to the looking glass, is the most attractive to young ladies, on entering a room) when she turned round, and exclaimed, " bless me, there is Lord Maldown driving into the court," and down she sat.

Sir Theodore could not repress a smile at her earnestness, and taking her hands between his,

" Are you very sorry, Armenia?" said the Baronet, archly.

" No, indeed, sir," replied she, with her eyes cast to his feet, only I thought you did not expect him."

His entrance rather added, than diminished the vermillion ; but the many compliments he had to pay Sir Theodore, Mrs. Byron, and Julia, on her happy return, gave her time to recover a little, before he addressed her. He ventured her hand to his lips, and congratulated her on the recovery of her good looks, since he last saw her, when she truly was the picture of woe. "Tis very certain there was a wonderful change in the figure of the whole family, since the return of Julia.

His Lordship said, the first account he had heard of that Lady's return, was from Lord Orwell, who had been in the deepest affliction at the misconduct of his son, and had written, through the means of his banker, to almost every town on the

the continent, to procure intelligence of his residence, and to warn him of the affair being made public in every news paper, if he did not return to answer a private inquiry into his conduct, and make the only reparation in his power, by a candid confession, and solemn promise never to make an attempt of the kind again.

This was very satisfactory intelligence to all present, and doubtless was part of the import of the letter for Captain Gordon.

Lord Maldown inquired for Miss Mandville, Mr. Theodore, and St. Clair. A silence prevailed, and the whole company looked at Sir Theodore.

"My son, and Mr. St. Clair, are well, my Lord," replied the Baronet; "Miss Mandville, by this time, is Mrs. Gordon."

Gertrude rose, and taking his Lordship's arm, before he could reply, turned him to look at those beautiful prints, and pressing her finger and thumb against his arm, conveyed her desire, through that channel, of his asking no further questions.

He looked surprised, but forbore, at the instigation he had just received, pressing any further inquiry. They soon became sociable; Lord Maldown informed them Lady Sophia was soon to change her state, and the young ladies concluded, in their own minds, that matrimony seemed at this time, to be quite the thing.

Far different was the idea of Mr. Theodore Mandville, at this period; matrimony to him was an odious bugbear; he shrank from it, and the tie it held to his view, seemed to destroy every delight the human mind was capable of; and fondly had he nursed the dream of pleasure that hid it from his sight, 'till the friendship of St. Clair

waked him from the vision, drew the veil from before him, and displayed, in its true character, the part he was acting.

In the course of their walk, (no moment having appeared so opportune before) he broke into the subject hinted at in the morning.

Theodore, at first, was silent, and then evaded it; St. Clair, summing up every manly sentiment at once, stopped short, and fixing his eyes on his friend,

"Are you or I changed, Mandville? are you capable of duplicity? or am I unworthy of your confidence?"

"Neither, neither," rejoined Theodore, "but surely, that letter I wrote you, whilst in India, may give you a clue to my misery."

"Are you married, then?" cried St. Clair, darting an eye of fire at him."

"Not so," answered his friend, "*that* remains to be compleated, Oh divine Julia!" added he, throwing himself on the earth, "angel of light, can I give thee up? source of all joy! can honour, rigid honour sever us for ever?"

"No honour can sever you from Julia Gordon; you have gained her affections—'tis visible, in spite of all her efforts to disguise it—where then is the honour that will not do her justice?"

"Have I gained her affections, did you say?" cried Theodore, starting up; "No, no, she is gentle, compassionate to all—perhaps she has seen me suffer, therefore pities me; but love! she does not love—and if she did—what am I?—oh thought;—bear with me, my friend, my anguish is insufferable."

Here he flung his head on the shoulder of St. Clair, while the contest of struggling passions changed every feature. That gentleman was concerned

cerned beyond measure ; he wished for an explanation, but to see Theodore tortured by his feelings, to such a degree, was paying too high a price for the propriety of proceeding ; so instead of pressing the subject, he soothed him by kindness, and prevailed on him to sit down by the river, and in the style of the school boy, drink some of the water out of his hat.

C H A P. XXXII.

AFTER a few minutes repose, 'Theodore grew calm, and regarding St. Clair, who had been some time silent, " You must remember," said he, " the situation I described myself in, when I wrote to you ; Mrs. B——'s health was in such a state, that opposition of any kind could not be offered her : she urged the necessity of a speedy marriage : I urged I had a father, whose consent and approbation must be obtained ; promising however, when we arrived in England, that my first step should be to make her happy, by presenting her to him with my own hand. In return for this promise, she offered me a hundred and fifty thousand pounds ; but I confess, I then wished she had preferred the gift to some more worthy object, for marriage was not my pursuit, and if it had, *she* could not have been the wife ; yet I loved her— I thought so then—but oh celestial— —."

" Where

" Where am I wandering — ? we embarked, my friend, and reached St. Helena, where several other vessels lay wind bound, amongst whom were French and English men of war. We went on shore, and made an excellent society. Mrs. B—'s got better, to all appearance, and we had several balls. This delightful climate seemed so salutary, that she proposed our staying there some time. I by no means approved of it, I guessed at the anxiety of my friends in England, and told her, if she would trust me, (as she found herself so much better) I would leave her there, and return, after gaining my father's consent to our marriage.

" She wept at my indifference, (as she called it) I comforted her, and pressed her to go with me; but after some days deliberation, she approved of my plan, and established her residence 'till my return.

" I again embarked; let me not touch on the events in Ireland; my senses were surprized in one instant; I felt a sentiment, a ray divine, unknown before; my soul was lifted up beyond the senses, and purity of adoration was my own; the Angel and the Woman both in one. Oh ! I could dwell for ever on the fancy ! but you have roused me, brought me back to memory ! I will disclose it all——tear open my wound——Julia will pity me."

St. Clair seeing him falling into his former phrensy, begged him to endeavour at composure, alledging a thousand reasons why he should do so, and promising to weigh every thing in a second retrospect of these unhappy circumstances, persuaded him; he still saw hope that Julia might be his.

Theodore

Theodore shook his head, and turned towards the house, pushing forward impetuously ; St. Clair endeavoured to stay him, but found his burning hand forebode no good ; he was seized with a dizziness, and it was with great difficulty St. Clair brought him, by a back way, into the house ; he persuaded him to lay down ; he sat beside him, invented a thousand improbabilities to give a turn to the mind, already too much absorbed in its own dark forebodings.

The dinner bell informed them it was time to attend ; Theodore started off the bed, his hair in loose disorder, and dirty with his walk, ran down stairs, before St. Clair could prevent him.

On entering the parlour, Lord Maldown was the first to salute him, or rather advanced to be presented ; but perceiving a wildness in his looks, stopped short, and looking round, observed a sudden change in every face.

" My son," cried the Baronet, " my Theodore."

Theodore saw nobody, but turning pale as death, fell at the feet of his beloved Julia.

St. Clair, who had followed close behind, begged them not to be alarmed, saying, " he had over exercised in the morning, and having lain down in order to recover himself by sleep, the dinner bell had suddenly awakened him, (probably from some uneasy dream) which had caused that wild and disorderly manner of entering the room."

Julia terrified beyond expression, had slid from off her chair, and placed Theodore's head on her lap, untied the neckcloth, and applied her Eau-de-iuce, while the silent drop fell upon his face, and anxiety sat upon her brow.

The

The servants, who had been all this time idle spectators, now were employed to raise Mr. Mandville to the sofa, and a messenger dispatched for the doctor; the ladies were all busied, and Sir Theodore full of distress.

St. Clair wished to convey his friend to his chamber, before he recovered, dreading a discovery of what could only give an additional wound to all parties, in the present state of affairs. He looked round with an expressive glance, that met the eye of Stephen, who had just entered the room.

"Come here, my friend," said the soldier, "are we not strong enough to carry your master to his chamber? he will be more at his ease when he is undressed."

Stephen waited no second summons, but placing himself at Theodore's feet, St. Clair took him under the arms, and he was on his bed in two minutes.

Poor Julia hid her face in her mother's bosom, and wept; nobody seemed inclined to touch the inviting viands that stood on the table before them. Sir Theodore had followed his son, and was still at the bed-side when signs of life returned.—The village surgeon appearing, he was immediately let blood, and declared to be very feverish.

"You have over walked yourself," said the Baronet."

Theodore sighed.

"Does it hurt you to speak?" added the father.

"It will give us both pain, Sir," rejoined he.

"Light, a little light headed," said the doctor—"much quiet, and much medicine, will be good in this case," continued he, "no attention
on

on my part shall be wanting, Sir Theodore; he will do vastly well, Sir, with good care."

Young Mandville groaned—the doctor shrugged up his shoulders, and muttered—delirium!

Theodore then said, "quiet you prescribe, let me have it?"

The doctor begged every body to quit the room, and he would see to the patient.

"Then will I throw you out of the window," said Theodore, enraged at his impertinence.

St. Clair advised the doctor to stay below stairs, who looked with a mortified grin towards the bed, and departed.

As soon as he had left the room, Theodore told his father, "he wished to discover all his miseries to him."

"What miseries can you have, Theodore? that your father wont relieve."

St. Clair hastily interrupted them, by desiring his friend to promote his return of health, by keeping quiet for the present, and that he would take upon himself to inform Sir Theodore of every thing.

"Worthy fellow how shall I repay you?" said Theodore.

"By taking care of yourself," answered his friend.

The first opportunity that offered, St. Clair informed the Baronet, "it was a fancy of the brain, occasioned by the fever, that caused his son to talk of misery, but that it was better to humour him in this prejudice, 'till reason was more powerful."

An assent was instantly given by this afflicted parent, and the advice adhered to. St. Clair's judgment seldom erred, and he saw nothing but double

double uneasiness could be produced, from giving a thorough knowledge to the Baronet, of all the circumstances; but if he could once see Theodore in a state of mind that would bear reflection, he thought some possible palliative might start up, to soften, if not remedy, this great evil, without giving a wound to his father.

Julia, and indeed not only Julia, but each individual gave a sigh and their wishes to the heir of the family. He was truly and deservedly beloved by them all; but this sudden illness struck such a damp upon our heroine, that the thought of losing him soon, made her perceive how necessary he was to her future happiness. She sought comfort by unbosoming herself to her mother, who in return, approved of her passion, and assured her it was sanctioned by the wishes of Sir Theodore. Julia blushed to think it had been spoken of, even before she herself knew it, but was soon reconciled to the propriety of her mother's conduct.

Some days passed, during which the Baronet, finding little ground gained of his son's disorder, sent off an express for Mr. Butler at —, requesting his immediate attendance. The messenger no sooner arrived, than Mr. Butler made ready (and as no necessitous wretch called for his present aid at home) he set forth very expeditiously for Bellepont, and arrived just about the crisis of the fever. He threw in some very effectual medicines, which gave a happy turn to the disorder, and soon after Mr. Mandville had no complaint, but extreme weakness, and lowness of spirits, for the latter of which, I think, Mr. Butler could find no antidote.

A letter

A letter now arrived, dated Orwell Manor, from Captain Gordon, to Mrs. Byron, inclosing two others for Sir Theodore, one from himself, the other from Alicia.

Mrs. Byron was much pleased to find they had taken possession of her house, and went to deliver her credentials to the hand of her friend. He received them with a look, that indicated the peace they sought would be granted on the most advantageous terms ; he smiled at their taking up their residence at Orwell Manor, and proposed, as Mr. Mandville was out of danger, going over there, to give them a meeting, and conduct them to Bellepont.

" You certainly have the happiest method of doing kindnesses, Sir Theodore," said Mrs. Byron.

" Look, my dear madam, at those letters," rejoined the Baronet, " and if a man has but one spark of tenderness in his heart, they will kindle it," presenting them to her ; " put them in your pocket, however, I know the effect they will have on you, and when you have read them; give them to Theodore."

Mrs. Byron took the letters, and withdrew to her own chamber, where having perused them, and wiped her eyes, she went towards Mr. Mandville's room, where she had spent some hours every day, since his illness. He was never so happy as when she was near him ; she was a part of her he dared not wish for. Propriety did not admit of Julia's making him a visit, but it did not prevent her thoughts following him, and prompting a thousand questions, whenever her mother quitted him.

When Mrs. Byron entered the chamber, he was sitting in an easy chair, pale and emaciated, with pen and ink before him.

That

" That is a bad occupation for you, Mr. Mandville," said she, " I do not allow of writing, 'till you are stronger; but I have brought you two letters, which will please you much better than any of your own writing, at present; will you read them?

Theodore held out his hand, but opened them with tremor; after perusing them, a faint smile gleamed over his face.

" You are pleased at the natural and affectionate style of your sister's letter, I am sure, and the manly and respectful acknowledgments of my nephew, to her and your father," said Mrs. Byron.

" What has man to interrupt him (possessed of all he holds dear) from making acknowledgments; 'tis the natural flow of the soul; I shall never know his feelings, because ——"

Theodore threw his head back in the chair, and shut his eyes without finishing the sentence.

" You will never get well, while you remain in your chamber; we must have you about," said Mrs. Byron; " I expected you would have been for setting off with us, to meet the bride and bridegroom; instead of which, you suffer this complaint on your nerves to quite conquer you. I shall ask Mr. Butler's leave, if you wont come down, to let a party of us drink tea with you this evening."

Theodore carried her hand to his lips, but made no answer, and the doctor coming up, she retired, and going down stairs, communicated the letters to her daughters, and St. Clair, who mutually congratulated each other on the happiness of their friends.

Lord Maldown, who had crossed the country the day after Theodore was taken ill, to visit his aunt,

aunt, now returned to Bellepont, where he was always a welcome visitor. He had scarce paid his compliments to the ladies, before he took Sir Theodore aside, and besought half an hour's conversation with him in private.

The subject being guessed at by the Baronet, was cordially assented to, and a servant being dispatched to the Manor, to announce Sir Theodore's intention of a visit on the morrow. The gentlemen retired to the library, to discuss the business so urgent with his Lordship.

Mrs. Byron then proposed asking Mr. Butler's leave to drink tea with the invalid. St. Clair knew not how to act, but offered to go on the inquiry. As soon as he reached the chamber, he told Theodore of their intentions.

"Have you philosophy enough to bear an interview with Julia," said he, "if you doubt yourself, let me make your excuses; I will get Mr. Butler to oppose their coming up."

Oh! St. Clair, as soon as I have strength, I will fly for ever! I must do justice to one, who perhaps at this moment languishes in my absence, and would die at my unkindness. I must sever myself from the too lovely Julia, who has the power to make me forget honour, humanity and justice; yet I will see her this once! could I refuse it? I cannot be more miserable! she attributes my feelings to my disorder; let her think so; I would not seem to love her."

"Poor Theodore;" rejoined St. Clair, "you give her penetration little credit which should have that to learn. But prepare yourself; I go to bring the ladies."

St. Clair had been directed by Mr. Butler, to try every means to divert the mind of his friend, as he plainly perceived a something there, that baffled

baffled all his skill, and very much dreaded its gaining such power, as to become a settled melancholy. This engaged him more readily to bring about the proposed visit, and the good doctor handed up Mrs. Byron, while St. Clair took Gertrude and Julia under each arm, and Armenia and Annette followed. The former stepped very lightly, as she passed the library, for fear of interrupting the conference.

On their entering the chamber, Theodore made an attempt to walk towards them, but what with weakness, and agitation, he got no further than the table, by which he held. His figure was indeed most interesting; worn down by the fever, and dressed in a long chintz dressing gown, he appeared half a foot beyond his usual stature, his hair profusely hanging on his back and shoulders, quite clean from powder, shewed its natural beauty; and his eyes large, becoming doubly so for want of cheeks, languished their meaning; need we add the hectic blush that shot its tinge at sight of Julia; yes, we will say it all, for, "thoughtless of beauty, he was beauty's self."

Julia, with a voice of exquisite feeling, made her compliments on his recovery; "but alas," said she, approaching nearer, "your countenance denotes not health! what can we do for you? your doctor talks of Bristol."

"Montpelier, or St. Helena," said the faltering Theodore, as he sunk in his chair, and reposing his cheek against the side of it, seemed near fainting.

Julia involuntarily put her hand to his forehead, and stood in great concern; he put up his, and pressing her's still closer to his head,

"What a moment would this be to die in?" said he, looking at her ardently.

Julia

Julia blushed, and retiring, seated herself at some distance. He recovered, and soon became calmer, and St. Clair throwing in some trifling and laughable conversation, they soon became an amusement, as well as comfort to this almost *despairing lover*.

Not so shall I term my Lord Maldown, who had made a very good use of the time allotted him in the library, by gaining every point he wished for. No sooner had he learned from Lord Orwell, that Julia was restored to her family, who were all assembled at Bellepont, than he sat off for that place, and being assured from his own eyes, that Armenia was still the same artless, innocent, unaffected maid, as when he first beheld her, he pursued his design of visiting aunt Barbara, in order to gain her consent, which was all he wanted, to make an open avowal of his intentions; and offer himself and fortune at the shrine of the charmer. The business was much more difficult than his Lordship foresaw, with this virgin of sixty-five: love was all nonsense in her ear: gold was the object of her idolatry, and but for that, she needed not have wasted her days in celibacy. But she looked to good interest for her money, in all the various suitors that had woed her; and still, hoping for a better offer, rejected all. This plea was used as cogent with her nephew, and for some days, he could make nothing of her: at length, with much humility, he affected to submit, but concluded by pledging his sacred honour, never to marry any other.

Miss Barbara was apt to be vehement, when things did not immediately suit her decree.

"What, sir," said she, "shall I see my father's title and estate revert to a family I despise? or shall they presumptuously look forward to those ho-

nours

nours you possess? you must marry, you shall, sir, or I myself will enter the state, on purpose to leave an heir, that shall deprive those miscreants of such hopes."

His Lordship bowed, and was silent.

"I tell you what, nephew," added the lady, "I will not be opposed. You have a fine estate, clear of incumbrances, and you will have mine, if you act up to my wishes; you will roll in riches, sir, and would bestow yourself on a girl without a shilling."

"I do not mean to oppose you dear madam; I gratefully acknowledge the goodness of your intentions towards me; and being so rich, as you design to make me, find no need of more."

"I will marry also, if you please, or you shall give an heir to the family; only fix your pleasure, as I leave Laurel Grove to-morrow."

Miss Barbara was very sullen the rest of the day, but at supper, condescended to inform her nephew, she would receive his wife, though her hopes were blighted of seeing him the richest Lord in Britain."

I need not repeat the high sentiments of obligations professed by his Lordship—suffice it to say, he set off next day for Bellepont, in order to beg of Sir Theodore, to open his proposals to Mrs. Byron, and procure her leave to declare himself the suitor of Armenia. This was the subject of the cabinet council, and Sir Theodore, at this period, had just sent Stephen with his respects to that lady, requesting she would grant half an hour's conversation to himself and Lord Maldown, and they would meet her in Alicia's dressing room.

Mrs. Byron, a little surprised at the request, considered a moment, then recommending the ladies not to fatigue Mr. Theodore, by too long a stay.

stay, she followed Stephen, who very consequentially, stepped on to open the dressing room door, and bowing, retired to deliver his message.

Mrs. Byron had not many minutes to ruminate, before the gentlemen appeared, and Sir Theodore opened the *cave* without loss of time.

The ice once broke, Lord Maldown made his own way, and went on in the customary routine of what is always said on the like occasions; nay, he offered a *carte blanche*, declaring, at the same instant, the business of his life should be to make Armenia happy.

Mrs. Byron was very sensible of the honour done her family, and scarcely thought it possible Lady Maldown should approve, in point of fortune, the choice her son had made; but being assured, by both the gentlemen, every party had been consulted, she, with her usual candor, told Lord Maldown,

“ She felt herself the happiest creature alive, in transferring the charge of a beloved child to so worthy and amiable a protector.”

Many fine things were said by each of the company, concluding, finally,

“ That as soon as Armenia’s consent should be obtained, the ceremony should not be delayed, that would unite two people formed for each other.”

Sir Theodore broke up the conference, by saying,

“ His hopes would be very much disappointed, if a third marriage in his family did not make out the lucky number.”

C H A P. XXXIII.

ST. Clair had just conducted the ladies from the sick room, when the other party joined them, and supper being announced, they sat down with variety of sensations. Lord Maldown was elevated to a pitch of enthusiasm; Sir Theodore felt, as all good people do, when they promote others happiness. Mrs. Byron's heart was full, and her eyes glistened frequently from tenderness. Armenia was fluttered, drawing inferences, from some expressions, in a half whisper, conveyed by her lover, and the lovely Julia was depressed from her internal reflections on the past two hours. Gertrude and St. Clair knew all that was going forward by intuition, and mutually sighed at their own cruel disappointments.

Mr. Butler was the only one of the company who was all himself; he eat very hearty, boasted of his patient this evening, who appeared much better, and talked of sending him to the hot wells, as soon as he could travel.

"We must keep the ladies about him, I see," said the doctor, "nurses are better than medicine, sometimes; and here is my friend and first acquaintance; I shall depute her soon to act in my stead."

Julia blushed exceedingly, and looked down; but Sir Theodore took her hand, and changed the subject, asking her,

"If she was not to be of their party to-morrow,
to

to conduct the bride and bridegroom home. St. Clair," continued the Baronet, "you shall drive Miss Gordon in Theodore's phaeton; Lord Maldown will have no objection to taking Armenia in his. Mrs. Byron, Julia, Annette and myself, will take the coach, and the chariot shall go empty, for the use of the new married pair."

Every body seemed very well pleased at this arrangement, except Mr. Butler, who wanted somebody to keep up the spirits of his charge, and unluckily pitched again upon Julia,

"Your party is strong enough, without this lady," said he.

She crimsoned, until the very tear stood on the brink of her downcast eye, which her mother observing, she rose and said,

"It was late, they must retire, in order to be early up on the morrow," upon which the company separated, until nine the next morning.

At breakfast every heart seemed delighted, save one; Julia was unusually depressed, and could scarce restrain her tears. It was proposed, before they set off, to look in upon the sick man; and Mrs. Byron taking Julia's arm, said,

"Let us go, Julia, we will prepare the way for the visitors."

They found Theodore very low, but he received them with a gleam of joy; Mrs. Byron, half laughing, proposed his going with them, to meet his sister;

"As soon as I can bear a journey, I must separate from every dear tie," rejoined he, "therefore I care little about my recovery."

"For heaven's sake, Theodore, throw off this dejection," said Mrs. Byron, "believe me, it is a worse malady than your fever."

"My fever was peace of mind to my present sufferings," said he.

Julia turned to the window; she could not subdue the gushing torrent—and Theodore, sorry for his own extravagance, pleaded the effects of the climate, by a too sudden change, as a cause for his uncommon disorder.

Mrs. Byron proposed staying with him, and letting the party go without her, but he would not hear of it. At last, recollecting himself, he turned to Julia,

"I will have Dorcas for my nurse to day; she shall repeat her story of the castle; she shall recount the hours you passed in viewing, from your prison, our shipwreck; she shall tell me of the many sad moments you spent beneath the rock—do let her come? I am sure it will divert me?"

Julia, already softened, could not stand a request, that wakened both love and gratitude; she ran out of the room, ashamed of her own feelings.

While Theodore, grasping Mrs. Byron's hand, exclaimed,

"I am undone, the veriest wretch that breathes; tell her not to pity me; comfort her; say I am mad! oh when shall I have rest!"

Mr. Butler entering, was very much surprised, to see Mr. Mandville so much agitated.

"What has been doing here, madam?" said he, turning to Mrs. Byron.

"Your patient is not candid, I am afraid, doctor," replied she, "he hides part of his malady—but at present I detain the party—when we return (if you cannot gain his confidence before) that business shall be mine: bless you, Theodore," added she, "be happy when you may." She then left him, and making her report below, that company seemed quite oppressive to Mr. Mandville,

ville, nobody but Sir Theodore visited the chamber.

Mr. Mandville always wore as unruffled an appearance as he could put on before his father, valuing the peace of his mind beyond his own; therefore, after presenting his affectionate congratulations to Alicia and Gordon, Sir Theodore embraced, and left him, supposing, from his manner, he was at least no worse than he had been the day before.

Julia having joined the company pretty well composed, they set forward, according to Sir Theodore's plan, concerted the night before, and took the road to the Manor.

Mr. Butler, from his own observations, and the hints of Mrs. Byron, took this opportunity of putting some close questions to his patient; from any other person, Theodore would have deemed this an unpardonable impertinence; but there was a plain open hearted trait about this man, seldom met, either in the great or little world. Theodore valued it, and paid it with integrity: in fine, he unbosomed all his griefs; declared his adoration of Julia, and at the same time mentioned his engagements abroad, with his determination to fulfil them, though his life would be a sacrifice to a point of honour, he doubted not; but when he thought of his father; of the distresses he should occasion him, whose every view was centered in his son, and who had planned a life of bliss to offer him, he shrank from his ideas, and became so unconnected, that all within was chaos.

" You are a woeful example of what is commonly called gallantry, Mr. Mandville," said the good man, this matter was began, as pastime, and as you confess, without one sentiment of real love on your part. I have, in the course of a long

life, been made acquainted with numberless affairs of that nature; but never did I see one that ended as it was begun; misery, either on one side or the other, has been the certain event, and though it came in various shapes, from various causes, yet the end was misery; and you (a man without a fault, I may say) have, from this one wrong step, plung'd yourself, your family, and I much fear, a lovely girl, in never ending regret.

"Old men must moralize, sir, but let me endeavour to put my shoulder to the wheel, and instead of commenting on the past, imagine what must be done for the future; I have no objection to a sea voyage, my practice is but small, and I have a competency; suffer me to go for the lady myself, and bring her to England; you shall write the state of your health, as a reason for my going: if she is worthy of you, you must do her justice; if not, I shall have a means of inquiring into her conduct, you could not have, by private investigation, before I am made known to her; for much I doubt the stability of one, so prone to change.

"Could I," said Theodore, "send a spy upon *her* actions, who would have lavished her whole fortune upon me? could I doubt *her*, who might have looked up to the highest honours in marriage, yet preferred me?"

"Trust me, Mr. Mandville, this lady may be what you represent her, but women love often from caprice, and some equally admired rival, already may have taken your place."

"But so circumstanced, doctor;" said Theodore.

"Why, that indeed," rejoined Mr. Butler, "but think of my offer, at any rate you will gain time, and as soon as occasion will admit, so as not to

to damp the present joy, inform Sir Theodore of your situation: in the mean time, get ready my credentials, and I will set sail for St. Helena, with the first conveyance. Your first business is to endeavour to repair your health, and I prophecy, Julia will be your's; I have a presentiment of it, though I hope you will keep silent as to any professions of love to her. Go to Bristol, any where out of her sight, 'till you hear of the success or failure of my voyage."

Theodore seemed much relieved, nay, even elated, by the foregoing conversation, but begged a day or two to deliberate, on the possible result of Mr. Butler's plan, lest he might be tempted, without weighing the matter, to do any thing unjust: so passed the hours at Bellepont.

But very differently were they occupied at the Manor—duty, harmony and love, sat presidents. The joyful bridegroom, and the trembling bride, advanced to meet their friends, and would have knelt, but the extended arms of Sir Theodore, received his daughter, and blessing her a thousand times, his eyes ran over. Then turning to her husband, he added,

"Value her, Gordon, as she deserves—thou art my son, embrace me."

Each of the ladies strove to be foremost in congratulations, and Alicia was passed from one to the other, 'till she was half devoured.

She called Mrs. Byron her dear Aunt, her young friends Cousins; "and you, St. Clair, we must be related; let it be by marriage? Gertrude"—that gentleman perfectly understood her, and prayed a silent amen.

Stephen and old Betty had contrived a very comfortable repast for the company; and Lucy, that morning, had shewn her skill in pastry. Captain

tain Gordon's servant was set to heat the oven, and farmer Owens supplied the curd for cheese cakes, and cream for the tarts. Mrs. Byron had not forgot the key of the cellar, so altogether, if it was not the most elegant, it was a most excellent entertainment, and every body seemed disposed to do it honour, except Julia; a sigh would now and then escape, and her fixed eye bespoke an absent mind.

She was rallied by Mrs. Gordon, who told her she envied *her*, "but never mind," whispered she, "you shall have Theodore, as soon as he is well."

For they had informed her, a cold and flight fever had kept him from accompanying them in their excursion.

"Perhaps," answered Julia, "Mr. Mandville may take the liberty of choosing for himself, or has already chosen: what will you do to provide for me in that case?"

"Indeed, I know not one in the world good enough." rejoined her friend, "without you take my father."

A general laugh followed this fallie of the lively Alicia, and Julia got off with flying colours, from a perplexing conversation.

Mrs. Byron proposed their staying all night at the Manor, but one and all voted against it, on account of Theodore, particularly Alicia, who longed to see her brother.

It was certainly too late at that season of the year, to set off, especially as some came in open carriages, but Lord Maldown ordering his man to ride postillion, St. Clair did the same, and wrapping their partners in horsemens great coats, they set the night air at defiance. A clear moonlight is always propitious to the lover, and moon and stars were favourable this evening.

Mrs.

Mrs. Gordon would by no means be separated from her friends, so leaving the chariot to Lucy and Stephen, she packed herself into the coach, between Sir Theodore and Mrs. Byron, bidding George squeeze himself in between Julia and Annette, opposite to her, and I pronounce her, at that instant, one of the happiest women alive.

They did not reach BellePont 'till midnight, but Mr. Butler waited for them, lest Alicia's affection might get the better of her prudence, and induce her to visit Mr. Theodore at so late an hour.

Every servant was ranged in the hall to receive them, and as they passed along, Mrs. Gordon failed not, by a smile, a nod, or a word, to give each of them some memorandum of her good nature. She seemed not well satisfied at Mr. Butler, for denying her access to her brother; she expressed her fears that he was much worse than she at first conceived him to be, and declared she would visit him as soon as any one was stirring in his chamber next morning.

In the mean while, the good folks in the kitchen were enjoying themselves, according to their ideas; John, taking example from his master, had fallen a victim to the charms of Miss Lucy; and Dorcas, kind hearted, and devoid of pride, had done away, by her smiles, the chilling cold which Agnes had hung in icicles about the heart of Stephen. All was merriment and joy; nor was Agnes less animated than the rest, she sung her little canzonet—displayed her witticisms on the folly of love, and boasted of her liberty; so true it is, that you may judge in general of the master of the family, from the conduct of his domestics: no heart burnings, or jealousy, created feuds in this society, they spared each other, as their

their master spared them; and every kind office that could be given, by assisting, in a case of neglect, was supplied by some or other of them, who in their turn received the like kindness.

So extremely happy were they in celebrating the return of their young lady, that day-light peep'd in, and told them it was now too late to go to bed, before they thought of separating, so brushing themselves up, and adding a little powder, they now waited in readiness for the morning summons, to attend in their separate departments.

Mrs. Gordon, according to promise, paid an early visit to young Mandville; but she was so struck by his altered figure, that all her joy was in an instant turned to tears.

He saw, and felt for her distress, and smiling, as he took her to his arms, he cried,

"Alicia, my beloved! welcome, doubly welcome? when did you return? where is your husband?"

"Oh, Theodore! do I meet you thus?" exclaimed she, "can there be no happiness without alloy? my brother, what have they done to you?"

"I am very well, so don't alarm yourself," rejoined Mr. Mandville; I *have* been ill, but in a day or two I shall change the air; nothing but weakness remains; but conduct captain Gordon to me, I have much to bring back for my inattention to him, which I cannot now explain."

"I will bring him to you myself," rejoined Alicia, looking wistfully at Theodore, as she stepped out of the room, and flying to her husband, she lay'd her head in his bosom, and gave a vent to her tears.

Alarmed at this appearance, he at first conceived her brother had been harsh, and burning with resentment, pressed her to his heart, and swore

he

he would beg with her, before she should submit to his ill usage.

She layed her hand upon his mouth, and soon recovering, gave him some idea of the situation of young Mandville, not forgetting the ardour he had expressed to meet her husband on the kindest terms, and the regret he had confessed at his former coldness.

Gordon, though led away by the vehemence of his wife at first, loved her the better for those gusts of nature which so much resembled his own, and taking one of her hands, and throwing his other arm round her, they proceeded along the gallery, to Theodore's apartment, who rose with open arms to salute his new brother. Every animosity dissolved in that embrace, and Mrs. Gordon had the happiness of assuring herself, the most perfect union was established on all sides.

Mr. Butler gave permission to his patient to quit his chamber, and Theodore took this opportunity of going down to the breakfast room, between his sister and brother, without any intimation of his design.

He entered, leaning on their arms, and astonished every body; his father rose, with the most delighted expression beaming in his eyes, and congratulated him: the ladies flocked round him with the sincerest joy, and Lord Maldown was now presented, who had never before seen him, but in the fit, at Julia's feet. He made his compliments in his usual style of elegance, but was visibly so fatigued, as to gladly seek repose on the sofa, between Mrs. Byron and his sister. His languid eye rose in quest of Julia, who sat opposite, in the utmost trepidation, and was the only one who had not shaken him by the hand. Gertrude was even now leaning over the back of his seat,

and Annette sitting partly on her mother's knee, that she might hold his feeble hand.

As his eye rose, that of Julia fell, and so discontented was she at her own chagrin (conscious it must be visible) that she determined to make an effort to conquer it, notwithstanding the rising blush impeded her speech, she assured Mr. Mandville of her happiness at seeing him again one of their party, and laid the merit of his change to the return of Mrs. Gordon.

"The interest you are so good as to take concerning me," rejoined Theodore, "might recall a man from the arms of death, therefore, you are to place my remaining so long confined, to my delirium; but now I already feel the effects of your kindness; my recovery must be very speedy."

Words of course, spoken with a certain air, become interesting; so true it is, Mr. Mandville gave an air to every thing he said, more fascinating even than his expressions.

C H A P. XXXIV.

SOME days passed on in this charming manner; Theodore gathered strength, and Mr. Butler talked of departing; his patient had not yet determined, whether Bristol, France or Portugal, should finish his cure. Reluctant to quit the spot, where rested all his treasures—but the doctor pressed him to be resolute, and give him letters for St. Helena.

He

He at length determined to consult his friend St. Clair, who giving the good man's project its due praise, joined in persuading Theodore, by all means, to adhere to such excellent council, and uncommon proofs of friendship, declaring,

" He thought he could have laid his own life down for Theodore, yet had not been fortunate enough to suggest so sure a means of serving him, the only one that could procure a knowledge of the truth, and deserts, of the unfortunate fair one."

Theodore wrote—he commented on his letter—it was cold—unfit, after so long an absence; to meet the eye of a fond despairing woman. He tore it, and wrote another—that was hypocritical, it carried with it words unfelt, therefore was an insult; that was also torn. A third, a fourth, a dozen lay before him; at length, fatigued with the effort, he begged Mr. Butler to take his choice of them.

" Now my dear Sir," said the good man, " I have only three things to add, and I have done with advice, make Sir Theodore acquainted with the affair. Set off yourself as soon as possible: leave your address with your banker in London, and I shall find you by letter, as soon as I have any thing to communicate."

The next day Mr. Butler proposed leaving Bellepont, and on the evening preceding his departure, Sir Theodore conceiving he was certainly going home, took him to the library, and gave him a bank bill for one hundred pounds. The Doctor put the hand that offered it on one side, and endeavoured to go out of the room, but Sir Theodore, unused to swear, forced it on him with an oath, as guiltless as my uncle Toby's.

Mr.

Mr. Mandville, it may be supposed, did not suffer his friend to undertake a perilous and expensive voyage on his own footing, but desired him to take what money was necessary, from his banker in London, at the same time gave him an unlimited order to receive from the same hand, any sum he might require.

Thus having settled every thing on the surest foundation, Mr. Butler set off, after his young patron had repeatedly promised to begin his own journey very shortly.

Theodore knew not how to confide his secret history to his father; at length he persuaded Mr. St. Clair to accompany him to Bristol Hot Wells, and from thence he designed making a general confession, by letter, of all facts, but he could not resist remaining at home this week; the next Mrs. Byron was to return to the Manor, and he did not know whether it might not be the last he should ever pass, in looking at, and conversing with, his adored Julia.

Lord Maldown was ever interceding for a speedy conclusion of the business of his heart. Mrs. Byron and Sir Theodore, already had received letters from Lady Maldown; and Armenia was complimented in the same way, by Lady Sophia. Her Ladyship hinted her wish, that one day might unite both son and daughter, and that six weeks, at furthest, was the time to be given for preparations for the nuptials. She pressed Mrs. Byron and her daughters to come to her for some days before, but Mrs. Byron confided her wishes to Sir Theodore, for the ceremony taking place at Orwell Manor, and that the hand of Armenia should be bestowed by him her excellent friend.

"I feel myself so flattered by the prospect," said the Baronet, "that I dare hardly oppose it, but

but in any other case, I should say, Lady Maldown ought to be gratified in this desire."

"I am sensible," rejoined the lady, "of the weight of the obligations I lay under to her Ladyship; but that is one reason why I would, if possible, avoid being more oppressed; I could not act for myself; as her guest, I could not give a hundred proofs of my own satisfaction to my neighbours, nor receive the additional pleasure of seeing them enjoy it—neither could Armenia support the blaze and bustle of the world, who is, by nature, timid and retired; the occasion itself will be awful enough to her, even when at home; therefore, my friend, get me off this visit if it can be done without offence?"

"I believe," replied the Baronet, "I must get you all down to Bellepont together, and bring Theodore into the party; nothing but his illness could have hindred him from publickly declaring his sentiments towards our lovely Julia, so apparent in all his actions—this, once done, Madam, you and I may sit down and say, our cares are over."

"When I see and hear you," rejoined Mrs. B_____, "I am often tempted to suppose, some ray of divinity will sparkle on my eyes. Is it in the nature of man to divest itself of every selfish thought? can the happiness of others so fill your cup with content, that riches, honour and power, stand for nothing? I almost tremble when I look upon you, in the form of Mentor, lest the radiant figure of Minerva rise before me."

Sir Theodore arose, and taking her hand,

"Come, madam," said he, "you have put me out of countenance, let me lead you to the company, as I never can suggest any thing handsome enough to repay your compliment."

Theodore

Theodore and St. Clair had been taking a gentle ride round the park, and planning future schemes, when the former found out, that St. Clair did not mean to prolong his excursion to Bristol, further than to see his friend perfectly out of danger of any relapse. His cottage, and its vicinity, was the only scene of his delight, and rambling in the mountains, or fishing in the streams, always afforded him some small offering to carry to his mistress. He and little Annette, would prepare the supper themselves, and when cooked, call the family together to partake of the repast, which often consisted of three small trout, or a couple of black birds, the reward of St. Clair's labours, after walking with his gun a dozen of miles, or standing half the day knee deep in the river. But Mrs. Byron made excellent hams, and hung beef, so she contrived, on these occasions, to garnish the table, that it might not be defective in the figure of five, seven, or nine.

I say Mr. Mandville had promised himself, that St. Clair would accompany him from Bristol, on his intended tour, and felt very much disappointed, at the hint of his friends' returning to his abode; but remembering, how hard it is to part with those we love, he forbore pressing him any further on this point.

Bellefont, at this time, became the resort of all the neighbouring gentry, and the eager desire every one had to pay their compliments to the bride and bridegroom, made it impossible for the family to enjoy any select society.

This crowd was quite oppressive to young Mandville, who wished, the few days yet remaining, might have been given to none but Julia and her family.

His

His spirits continued low—a constant anxiety sat on his brow, and he was ever restless, strolling from one room to another, and from one occupation to another—sometimes billiards, sometimes chess—now music—then the pencil—then a book, and each left unfinished, though pursued with avidity; for, as he threw down the book, he would seize either Gordon or St. Clair by the arm, and hurry to the billiard room, where, in less than ten minutes, he would throw down the queue, and propose chess; from thence catch up the clarinet, and play the first page of some overture; then quit that to look at the prospect for a view—scratch a farm house and half a bridge; then search for Julia, and if he found her, draw his chair close, and affect to doze, that he might not be disturbed in castle building, 'till some new visitor disturbed the waking dream.

Sir Theodore could not help observing the slow progress towards the amendment of his son's health, and pressed him to name an early day for setting out for Bristol.

Mr. Mandville observed, one parting scene might do for all, and the same day that separated Mrs. Byron's family from those at Bellepoint, should serve him to begin his journey to the Wells.

The Baronet smiled, yet wondered at his son's mysterious conduct.

" You intend conducting Julia home, then, in your road," added he, significantly.

" I am going to walk on the terrace," replied Mr. Mandville, " this fine day;" so saying he opened the door, and strolled down the lawn.

His father sighed, and retired to his study, pondering in his mind the cause of such strange conduct.

Theodore

Theodore rambled on, "unknowing what he sought," until he came near the Reed House, where he beheld the lovely Julia, with her eyes fixed on a paper, she was traighting with a pencil.

Her mind was so bent upon the design before her, that she did not perceive the approach of Mr. Mandville, who, in a state of surprise, seemed transfixed to the spot where he stood. The first emotion he felt afterwards, was curiosity—he saw her raise the paper, and hold it in different lights—then rub out part, and resume the crayon again: he never had seen her apply to portrait painting, and yet her attitudes seemed to imply an attempt of that kind. Was it generous to steal on her retirement? was she not at liberty to call her genius to whatever study pleased her best? ought he not to retreat, and leave her to pursue those innocent, and laudable occupations, without abruptly breaking in upon them? there could not be a doubt of how he ought to act.

Mr. Mandville stepped backwards, until an opening suffered him to go on the inside of the hedge, down a small alley, that led round the back of the Reed House; he trod as light as foot could fall, but finding himself just close behind the hive that held his charmer, some unseen impediment rivetted him to the spot, and the palpitation of his heart thumped strong enough to have disturbed her, if all her senses had not been absorbed in one idea.

Why the architect that planned this grand structure, should have made one small window behind, I know not, but it something resembled that in the back of a carriage; and to this window did Mr. Mandville, by the help of a stature of six feet, standing on tip toe, apply an eye like a hawk's, which quickly perceived the outlines of a figure, bearing

bearing a likeness to himself, and some writing, resembling verse, beneath it. But as Julia varied the position, by holding it in different lights, he could not read the words, though more and more persuaded of the likeness. He staid not for reflection, but collecting all his strength, sprung over the hedge, and was at her feet in an instant.

Julia, terrified at this sudden appearance, thought first of Wentworth, and shrieked vehemently, letting fall the paper, and endeavouring to escape.

"Wretch that I am!" cried Theodore, "what have I done? stay, Julia, for pity's sake, sure I have not killed you?"

Julia turned round, and not able to speak, resumed her seat, while Theodore uttered the most frantic exclamations at his own folly: still on his knees imploring her, only to utter one word to save him from distraction.

She looked at him attentively, and holding out her hand, burst into a violent shower of tears.

He pressed her hand to his beating breast, then to his burning forehead, then laid his lips upon it, as if, for ever.

Julia's recollection returned, when attempting to withdraw it, he lifted up his eyes with the most supplicating look.

"Can you forgive me, angel as thou art? oh! could you know the sufferings of my heart, you would excuse those transports that carry me even to madness?"

"I adore you, my very existence hangs upon you, and yet I have nearly destroyed you—say you pity me? say you do not hate me? what would I have you say? I dare not speak."

"Let me retire?" said Julia, "my senses were so alarmed, that I cannot form any judgment of the

the present conversation ; some other time ; you have always a claim on my gratitude in every respect, and may demand an audience when I am better prepared to speak."

She rose, Theodore would have detained her, but she begged him to let her go. He offered to conduct her to the house, which he did, lost in his own conjectures.

At the door, he again pressed the hand to his breast, and took one look, as if it were his last ; he gazed until she was out of sight, and then returned to the Reed House, mechanically, where the first object that presented itself, was the picture laying on the floor ; he took it up, and put it in his bosom, and finding his agitation too much for his spirits, in his weak state, returned to his apartment, in which he remained the rest of the day, excusing his absenting himself, by pleading a bad head ach.

No longer able to endure the conflict, Mr. Mandville wrote two letters, one to his father, the other to St. Clair ; the first was an excuse for his sudden and secret departure, promising to explain his conduct, the moment he found himself equal to the task. That to St. Clair, was to entreat him to follow immediately, hinting at the interview with Julia having caused him to outstep the limits he prescribed himself, and earnestly beseeching St. Clair to plead some apology to her, for all the pain he had occasioned her.

"Tell her," said he, "a very few months will explain my unaccountable conduct ; tell her I will either never see her, or devote my life to her."

Not a syllable of this was delivered by Mr. St. Clair ; he judged very rightly, that any conversation on the subject, must make it worse, and left it to Sir Theodore Mandville, and her mother, who

who would soon be in the secret, to act with their accustomed prudence, in regard to this matter.

Mr. Mandville had left Bellefont before day light, attended only by his man—sleep had not once closed his eye-lids, neither had one gleam of comfort even flattered him through the night.

When he arose, it was all hurry, and when he mounted his horse, he sat off at full speed, as if he dared not to deliberate.

Far otherwise was it with Julia; after conquering the effects of her fright, she felt a happiness, until now but doubtful. From circumstances, she had judged she was beloved, by the only man she could prefer; but she was now convinced—he had declared it, and with that unfeigned ardour, it was cruel to suspect it; nothing appeared in her path but roses—her mother approved, Sir Theodore sanctioned, her well placed affection. Elysium dreams gladdened her repose, and she arose, like Aurora, casting her sun beams on all around her.

Those sun beams, alas, did but draw up a shower of sorrow; happy in the deception, Why did you go down to the breakfast room? why cast an inquiring eye for some one wanting? why collect an inference from the letter in Sir Theodore's hand? or why inquire if Theodore was worse?"

"He is gone!" said Mrs. Gordon.

"Gone! where?" rejoined the astonished Julia.

"To Bristol, I believe," returned Alicia, visibly affected; "but St. Clair is preparing to follow him."

Julia sat down, and endeavoured to collect herself—she hemmed, turned pale, pulled up her gloves; took out her handkerchief—but all would not do; she turned to Alicia, and scarcely intelligible, said, "I have forgot my pocket book;"

She

She hurried out of the room—Gertrude followed her to her chamber, but the door was locked: she tapped, no one answered.

"Pray admit me, Julia," said Gertrude, "can you refuse your sister, who participates all you feel? I must see you before St. Clair leaves us."

The lock was turned, and Gertrude received the drooping lily in her bosom. Her tears flowed in abundance, nor did any efforts of her sister alleviate, in the smallest degree, the keenness of her sensations. She pressed her to disclose the cause of such sudden emotions, but Julia only shook her head.

She offered to bring St. Clair to her, that he might use his endeavours to compose her mind, either by advice or service.

"No."

"Shall I call our mother to you?" added Gertrude.

"Yes."

Gertrude rung the bell, and a servant appearing, she sent down for Mrs. Byron, who very much affected by Sir Theodore's concern for his son, wanted not the additional grief of seeing her own daughter so inconsolable.

On entering the room, she exclaimed,

"My child! my Julia! why this unusual transport?"

"Take me home, my mother?" said the agitated mourner, "hide my infirmity—shame and disappointment are my portion. Theodore is deranged—oh anguish, bear with me! take me to our peaceful home again, I say: what have I to do here?"

Gertrude, who had left the room, as her mother entered it, hastily returned to inform her, an express had been forwarded to St. Clair from the cottage,

cottage, importing that his uncle, (his mother's brother) Mr. Blake, had sent for him, and lay extremely ill, and wished to repair a long animosity he had conceived against his nephew by giving him his last blessing and forgiveness.

"Worse and worse," cried Mrs. Byron, "he cannot then follow Theodore; where will this end?"

"Let us go?" said Julia, still keeping to that point; "I beg it; let *me* go at least, and Dorcas, it is the only relief I am capable of receiving at present."

A servant tapped at the door.

"Sir Theodore begs to see you, Madam."

"I come directly," returned Mrs. Byron.

"Will you order a chaise?" cried the unfortunate Julia, detaining her mother.

"A few hours can make but little difference," rejoined her mother; "how can I leave Sir Theodore at this crisis? what is to be done with Lord Maldown?"

"Only let me go; my mother; I conjure you! do not mention me to any one below; but suffer me to depart directly?"

"I will go with her," said Gertrude, "and manage it as she would have it; I will take Stephen and Cæsar to guard us, and you can then, Madam, arrange your hour of departure as shall seem best suited to the circumstances that may arise."

Mrs. Byron, perplexed beyond measure, went to the parlour, where remained Mr. and Mrs. Gordon, Lord Maldown, Armenia, Annette, St. Clair, and Sir Theodore.

St. Clair then declared his design of seeing his friend, before he went to his uncle; Sir Theodore opposed it vehemently; Lord Maldown and Captain Gordon, both offered to go to Bristol instead

stead of him ; but Sir Theodore thought it best to go himself, as he very much feared his son's intellects were affected.

" I will take upon me to vouch for the soundness of his judgment," answered St. Clair, " a few days will convince you, Sir, I am in the right ; the situation of Mr. Mandville is distressing, from a combination of circumstances ; but I have already transgressed the bounds of honour ; to conduce to your satisfaction, repay me, by crediting my assertions."

C H A P. XXXV.

THE company were all too well acquainted with the nicety of St. Clair's notions of honour, to press him further on the subject, and he concluded, by saying, " he would see Theodore at all events, and dispatch an express to Bellefont, with an account of him ; that he should then push forward, in order to see Mr. Blake, and return to Bristol as soon as possible."

Quitting the parlour, he sought out Gertrude, and after taking a hasty farewell, and promising her the most exact information of his proceedings, vaulted the saddle, and was gone in an instant.

In ten minutes after, the chaise drove out of the court, when Gertrude, Julia and Dorcas, attended by Stephen and Cæsar, without any one being in the secret, but Mrs. Byron ; the breakfast parlour

lour being backwards, they only heard the rattling of the carriage; on the sound of which, Sir Theodore rung the bell, to say he was not visible.

They had lived together so long, that Gertrude thought it very pardonable to borrow the escort of Stephen, without asking his master's permission, as she did not think it right to proceed on any journey with Julia, unguarded, while it remained to be learned what was become of Wentworth.

Stephen was to be depended on—his fidelity had been tried, and he had given proofs of courage worth a dozen Wentworth's. Cæsar was her own, the gift of St. Clair, and only borrowed from her, when waiting upon him.

The journey was long and dreary, little was said on either side; Julia ceased to weep, and Gertrude was revolving in her mind the sudden transitions of joy and grief, within the last month. Mr. Blake had taken a disgust at his nephew, on his becoming a soldier, he had an estate of four thousand pounds a year, and as he scarcely spent five hundred, it had accumulated to what is called a round sum in the funds. He had refused his nephew any pecuniary assistance, since he declined the honour of staying at home in the capacity of his Bailiff, or Land Steward, and vowed to cut him off with a shilling. All intercourse had long ceased between them, until the moment was drawing nigh, that too often brings with it repentance; and it was now likely the other extreme might put St. Clair into possession of his whole fortune.

It is not to be wondered at, that an event so unexpected, should occupy the ideas of his beloved mistress; and though she gave every tribute due to sisterly affection, she could not entirely divest herself of the pleasure of peeping at happiness, when it seemed in view.

In this reverie, she was disturbed by the postillion suddenly stopping his horses; on her asking the reason, he informed her that three men, seeming sailors, were fighting at the foot of the hill.

Stephen rode up, and declared there were two men upon one, and begged he might be permitted to make it even. Accordingly, he was up with them in an instant, not however time enough to prevent a blow with a bludgeon, falling on the head of the attacked. At sight of succour, the villains made off, but Stephen rode after, and coming up with them, he dismounted, but they had the address to leap the hedge, during that action, and he being incumbered with boots and spurs, saw no chance in a pursuit, so turned round to the vanquished man, who lay bleeding on the ground.

He was dressed in a naval uniform, had a watch in his pocket, large silver buckles nearly reaching to the point of his shoes, and as far as could be discovered, was a well looking man. The ladies being drawn up, asked Stephen "What should be done with him in this distress?"

"I will try to place him on my horse, madam, if I can get any sense in him," said Stephen, endeavouring to raise the wounded man, but it was impossible, he fell every way.

Julia, forgetting her sorrow, in the cause of humanity, proposed walking on, as they were only five miles from home, and putting the gentleman into the chaise; but Stephen said, "He was sure his horse would carry double, and he would take Dorcas behind him."

So the stranger was placed in the room of Dorcas, and they arrived, by slow degrees, at Orwell Manor.

It

It was the most fortunate circumstance for these young ladies, that they brought occupation with them, it spared Julia many a bitter tear, and administering relief to the anguish of the wounded, helped to deaden the pains of her own wounded heart.

The young gentleman soon regained his senses, and Stephen having washed his head with wine, and poured oil into the wound, repeated the ablution internally, which revived him exceedingly.

They found him to be a lieutenant in the navy, who had been employed in the impress service; that having occasion to cross the country, on business that obliged him to carry money, these villains, in his own service, had way-laid him, in order to rob, or, as he supposed, murder him; but the timely assistance (for which he never could be too grateful) had frustrated their design.

Gertrude would not suffer him to depart, until her mother arrived, and a chamber was prepared, to which he was glad enough to retire, after the severe buffeting he had received from the ruffians.

Julia again found time to weep—Gertrude proposed going to rest, as she thought it too late to expect the family; but before the clock struck twelve, Mrs. Byron, Lord Maldown, Armenia, Annette, and Agnes arrived, in Sir Theodore's travelling coach.

As soon as that lady had heard the carriage with her two daughters, go from Bellefont, she drew the Baronet aside, and informing him candidly of the state of Julia, made her excuses for the sudden and seeming rudeness she had been guilty of, in departing so abruptly.

The worthy Baronet felt all the griefs of his young friend, and mingled them with his own; he declared Theodore's conduct would soon weaken

ken his affection, if not cleared up, and his only dependance now rested in what St. Clair had hinted; he promised to exert every means of softening the calamity of his friends, by communicating to them the most early intelligence, as it came to him, and desired Mrs. Byron not to suffer the confusion his son had occasioned, to interfere with the happiness of Armenia and Lord Maldown. He advised her to let the marriage be solemnized, and suffer the young couple immediately to set off for Richmond, where Lady Maldown had a villa, and where the intended nuptials of Lady Sophia, and Mr. Beauchamp, were to be concluded directly.

After this friendly and fatherly counsel, he consented to their departing after dinner.

Captain Gordon promised to drive over to Orwell Manor in a day or two, but Mrs. Byron opposed it, unless some intelligence should arrive, to compensate for the loss of his company to Sir Theodore.

Mrs. Byron, at her return, was a good deal surprised at the adventure her daughters had met with, but approved of their kindness to the stranger, whom she longed much to see, from their description of him.

She invited Julia to partake her chamber, and retiring together, she soon made her acquainted with what St. Clair had communicated to them, with regard to Mr. Mandville's unaccountable conduct.

Relieved in one respect from the horror she sustained by the idea of the insanity of Theodore, she now dreaded his being unworthy of her anxiety, and made her mother acquainted with the scene at the Reed House; to all which, Mrs. Byron was forced to recommend the old remedy of patience,

patience, a sure nostrum, if a proper dose be administered, and time given to work the effect.

As Julia had slept on roses the preceding night, she was the better prepared to do without repose, on the present one. Her imagination formed so many phantoms, in the shape of attachments, to Theodore, that she could have persuaded herself he had had as many wives as Blue Beard, and was only soliciting her affection, to add to the number of his victims.

She rose early, pale, and unrefreshed, and strolled down the elm walk, 'till the family assembled. Her pride now prevented her from weeping, but her mind was the more agitated, and she returned to the parlour with a dejected countenance.

Mrs. Byron had dispatched Stephen, with a compliment to the stranger, who in return assured her of his respects, and he would wait on her. She would have sent Stephen back, to prevent his quitting his apartment, but his entrance rendered it unnecessary.

He made her his grateful acknowledgements, in a short mode of his own, very expressive, and looking at the young ladies, praised them, as kind hearted lasses, and owned himself so much their debtor, that nothing but making a prize of a homeward bound East-Indiaman, could "square their scores; not," he continued, "that they look as if they valued riches either, but egad, he did not know which way to be even with them otherways."

Gertrude smiled, and desired him to take care of his wound, and there scores would be soon squared."

Mrs. Byron was desirous of knowing the name of a person, so brought by chance under her care, and for whom she could not help feeling a par-

ticular interest ; she expressed her wishes, and he as soon gratified them, by making a profound bow, and begging leave to introduce her to Lieutenant Bowman.

"Bowman!" cried she, "of what family?"

"That, indeed," replied he, "is more than I bargained for, but I find an inclination to comply with all your desires, madam."

"As to a mother, I don't think I ever had any; a father I certainly had, who took me under his protection at eight years of age, to walk the quarter-deck of a man of war he commanded. His wife (God bless her) was as good to me as to her own daughter, and I was soon made Midshipman, and was taught to dance and fiddle, both of which I soon became an adept in; as to the fine arts, as they call them, they would not digest in my head piece, so in their stead I took to navigation, at the rate of nine nots an hour; I was made a Lieutenant, and if my dear father had lived," (here the sailor looked quite becalmed) "I say, if my father had lived, I should have had a ship as well as the best of them, in lieu of being knocked about with a press gang; but never mind it, if I lose this eye, (pointing to the one that was bound up) his Majesty King George will give me a pension to lay me up for life, and then I'll get married, and live comfortable."

"And do you think you would know that daughter you spoke of?" said Mrs. Byron, much fluttered.

"May be not," said the sailor, "for 'tis many years since I saw her, for she married a man I did not like, because he did not use her well enough, so I seldom went to their house, lest I might be tempted to beat him; and being soon ordered abroad, I did not return 'till her husband was

dead

dead, and she gone to France, or Scotland, or somewhere, but I could never find her."

" Dear Tom !" said Mrs. Byron, " behold your sister !"

" By Jove, I thought you were like her," said he, as he *squeezed* her in his arms: but all these big children, where did they come from ?"

" All these you have seen in infancy," replied she,

" Well ! what a meeting is this ! quoth the sailor and this gentleman (approaching Lord Maldon) is he your son ?"

" Very shortly I hope for that blessing." said his lordship.

" Well, then we will shake hands ; and which of these beauties (for they are all so) is your chosen bride," added the sailor : " oh, oh, I see by the hoisting of the red flag : " well, I wish you all happiness, and I beg I may be at the wedding."

Armenia's cheeks flushed deeper and deeper ; but the sailor, turning to her mother, forgot the subject, by returning to old stories.

At breakfast, Agnes brought in the coffee, and as she really carried an appearance beyond the style of a servant, Mr. Bowman whispered Mrs. Byron,

" Who is that young lady ? is she a relation of ours ?"

Being answered in the negative, he added, as she left the room,

" She is the tightest little frigate I have seen a long while, well built, and in good trim."

The company could not resist a smile, at the shrewd remark of the lieutenant, who now began a very hearty breakfast, in spite of the wounds and bruises of the last day, every now and then larding the

the repast by some laughable observation in the sea phrase.

Stephen and Agnes came to remove the breakfast things, when Mr. Bowman fixing his one eye full in her two black ones, said,

"Miss, will you please to be so good as to slacken this bandage?"

Agnes, who was the best tempered girl breathing, turned quickly on her heel, and with an air she had acquired in France, tripped toward him, to do the good office; untying the handkerchief, she observed it was much too thick;

"I will procure you a lighter one, sir, immediately," said she.

"As you please, my sweet little creature," rejoined the sailor; "the longer your pretty fingers are employed about me, the better," and he sat in the same posture, waiting her return.

She soon brought the bandeau, and accommodating it nicely to the part, she made her courtesy, and was retiring, but the sailor laying hold of her petticoat, put a guinea into her hand.

Agnes coloured, and putting on a serious air, insisted on his taking it back again, which he refused, but Agnes laying it on the table, added,

"Thanks to my kind lady, gifts are ill bestowed on me, sir, I do not want them."

So vanished Agnes, while the sailor exclaimed,

"What a noble spirit! she is certainly one of us, sister!"

Mrs. Byron had admitted him to give her that title, and he was always happy to make use of it. She then (while the young ladies retired to their several occupations) gave the history of Agnes to Mr. Bowman, which, as we are already acquainted with, it will not be amiss to step to the Hot Wells, and inquire after Mr. Mandville.

He

He had just arrived, after a fatiguing and melancholy journey. He found it necessary to send for a medical man immediately; for though, perhaps, he might not have objected to be shot from the mouth of a cannon, a lingering consumptive case was a trial of that virtue he very little possessed.

He went to bed, and observed the sage counsel of his doctor; but the arrival of St. Clair, some few hours after, was a cordial to his drooping spirits, much more efficacious.

He learned the situation of his friends, after his letter had been read; he heard of the agitation of his beloved Julia, with joy and sorrow, and lastly was informed, by St. Clair, that one hour's delay might mar the establishment of his friend for ever."

He started up, and reproached him for losing an interest in one, every way unworthy of such friendship; hurried him to proceed, and took upon himself to return an express to BellePont, with an account of his own health, and some reasons for his departure, reserving the grand discovery a few days, 'till the agitation of his mind should be enough subdued, to go into particulars.

St. Clair set off, so did the messenger from Theodore, and no variety taking place any where amongst our friends, for some days, we will take a peep into the Bay of Biscay, where good Mr. Butler was raised on the foaming billows, under a fair gale for St. Helena.

He had just acquired his sea legs, and could balance his body and his soup with wonderful skill; could play at back-gammon one half of the day, and descry floating islands, mountains and capes, fly away with wonderful precision; could sleep fourteen hours out of twenty-four, and eat

five times in the remaining ten. I think, want of variety brought me here, and that as certainly will make me leave the dear doctor, to tumble in the vast space, my aching eye can look upon no longer.

Lord Maldown is importunate ; letters, arrive with consent to the marriage being performed in the country. Lady Maldown gives a most affectionate invitation to her intended daughter; Sir Theodore is invited, but is indisposed ; the day is named, and Thursday week the ceremony will be performed in the village church.

There is abundance to make up for dearth ; all the family at Orwell Manor, were busied in preparations : Julia, even Julia assisted, receiving some alleviation to her own sorrow, from the prospect of happiness held out to her sister.

Mr. Bowman was quite delighted ; he was almost well of his wound ; but having written to the regulating Captain, he got another officer appointed in his stead, determining not to quit his relations, 'till the ceremony was over.

He grew very fond of the young Lord, who paid him particular attention, from an observation very easily made, that under all that unpolished singularity, lay a heart seldom to be found in these days of duplicity and self love.

A sailor, 'tis said, finds a mistress in every port ; whether that was Mr. Bowman's case, I can't say, but he certainly had found one at Orwell Manor, that made sad havock. Her eyes, her ankle, her walk, her teeth, in short, she was armed at all points ; and he never pass'd her, but a fresh arrow struck in his heart.

Cruel Agnes ! why so scornful ? no, not scornful, reserved.

The lieutenant finding himself very uneasy, and afraid of offending Mrs. Byron, ventured to confide

fide his sentiments to Lord Maldown, who at first laughed at him immoderately, but the gravity of Mr. Bowman, which became profound, made his Lordship afraid of giving offence.

" You cannot mean to marry Agnes," said he.

" I do," replied the sailor, " if I can get her consent, without offending my sister. As to family, we shall never quarrel, neither having cause to boast of their birth ; and as for breeding, didn't my sister breed her up ? that's enough ; and as for fortune, get me appointed Lieutenant of a frigate, and a few leagues of salt water may make both our fortunes, unless a cannon ball should take off my head, and then she would be sure of the pension."

" My worthy friend," said Lord Maldown, " I think, amongst my intimates, I must find some one that will get you the promotion you deserve ; as to the young woman, consult Mrs. Byron, she has the best right to give you advice, and be assured of an appointment, as master and commander, within a month after I get to London.

The sailor wrung him by the hand, and muttered something between his teeth, not quite intelligible, which was more expressive of exquisite feelings, than an oration from Cicero.

The letter of letters had been received at Belle-pont, conveying a minute account of every circumstance concerning Mrs. B—— ; many pages were filled, for after leaving her, Theodore went through every trying situation of his heart, from the time of his shipwreck, 'till his arrival at Bristol, where he now took up the pen, in order to satisfy Sir Theodore, by laying open all his weakness, and beseeching advice and forgiveness.

The Baronet was so affected by this information, that a slow fever soon succeeded, and Mr.

and Mrs. Gordon were in the greatest distress. That he was disappointed in the fond hopes he had nourished, was now his smallest concern; the idea of Theodore being united to a woman of levity, in order to fulfil the punctilio of honour, rankled in his bosom, and all his philosophy sunk before it. In vain did he seek to give advice to his son; he saw no likely means to save him, his peace or honour was for ever blighted.

He had expressly forbid any of his family informing his friends of his indisposition, in any other manner than a flying attack of the gout; and when the invitation came from Orwell Manor, Mrs. Gordon pleaded that complaint, as a reason for their not complying with the request.

Captain Gordon, however, waited on his fair cousin, as the important day drew nigh; but having promised secrecy to the Baronet, answered all their inquiries evasively.

He was introduced to Mr. Bowman, with whom he soon became very intimate. Excellent wine, intermixed with anecdotes, graced by the Sailor's manner of reciting them, created an unreserved confidence, and every day, after dinner, they became downright jolly fellows, toasting the absent ladies, and getting sentimentally tipsy in honour of their loves, Mr. Bowman having informed the Captain of the desperate attack he was sinking under, from the bright eyes of Agnes.

C H A P. XXXI.

MRS. BYRON had proposed to Armenia, to take Agnes as her own servant, as Dorcas was a sufficient assistant at the toilette of their family, and by promoting the former to the service of her daughter, she gave her such an establishment, as no girl in her situation could refuse.

This, by chance, came to the ear of the Lieutenant, who forgetting all fear of the displeasure of Mrs. Byron, declared his intentions of offering Agnes an establishment of her own, and called upon Lord Maldown to witness his sincerity. His Lordship confessed he was in the confidence of the sailor.

" It does not signify, sister, I don't mean to give you offence, but this young woman is more to me than all your fine ladies : you would choose to tack me to some Miss of condition, who would laugh at me in her sleeve, though her want of a husband might induce her to splice, rather than die an old maid. Now if this girl can but love me, she is quite my sort, and she shall be a Captain's lady, won't she, my Lord ? "

Lord Maldown bowed, but forbore joining in a conversation, where the sailor's vehemence bore down all before it, and he saw Mrs. Byron was not too well pleased ; however, her politeness might restrain her from condemning Mr. Bowman.

" I am very well convinced," said that Lady to her brother, " that my influence is such, that
if

if you are determined to throw yourself away, Agnes will not consent to what I disapprove."

"Sister," said he, "few words are best; if you set your wits to work to prevent my happiness, I go volunteer in the first King's ship for Botany Bay."

"Give me your hand, Tom?" rejoined the lady, intending to soften him, "consider of this matter, you will, on reflection, see it differently."

"No," said the sailor, holding back, "you are not my friend, to set me against the very girl made on purpose for me."

"Well, I will not interfere, if you will promise to do nothing in a hurry," added she.

"In a hurry," cried he, "what, for you to send her off, while I, like a stupid lubber, lay too, and suffer you to bear away with the prize to a neutral port?"

"Take your own way," said Mrs. Byron, hastening out of the parlour.

She met Mr. Gordon in the hall, who she beckoned to follow her to the garden, willing to advise with him on the mode she should adopt with the retrograde sailor.

"Let him have her," said her nephew, "she is an excellent girl, and I see no impropriety in the matter; she shall be portioned among us, and I shall stand father, and give her away."

"You treat the matter ludicrously," said Mrs. Byron, gravely.

"No, upon my honour, I don't mean to do so," said Mr. Gordon, "but I am sure he will be much happier with her, than any one you could pick out for him, so pray, dear aunt, let us have a double wedding, and place the bride and bridegroom in St. Clair's cottage, until his return, we can

can then seek out one to suit them ; Bowman's duty will soon call him away, and she will still be under your patronage."

Mrs. Byron did not seem reconciled to her nephew's opinion, but returned to the house, in order to consult her daughters, who were every one against her, and eager for so good an establishment for their favourite.

Little Annette was doubly pleased, as she had looked very cloudy, ever since she heard Agnes was to go away with her sister Armenia.

At length the damsel herself was summoned to appear before the court, and the lady, president, in her easy chair, thus addressed her.

" My good girl, I call you now to declare your sentiments, without prevarication ; I have always looked on you with a maternal eye, so don't deceive me : have you conceived a partiality for Mr. Bowman ?"

" Me ! madam, conceive partiality for a man ? you know I have had many suitors, if my inclination had led that way—indeed, madam ;"— and Agnes would have proceeded, but she could not.

" A gentleman, child, may have awakened that sentiment in your bosom, that a common person would only serve to repel.

" Come, tell me, has not the kind offices you have done for the Lieutenant, and his grateful acknowledgment, made you wish you were destined to be a gentleman's wife ?"

" Dear Lady ! cried Agnes, falling on her knees, " you know one's very thoughts ; I am sure I never meant to offend you, by looking so high ; but it crept into my mind before I was aware of it ; but if you will forgive — ?"

" Forgive,"

"Forgive," said Gertrude, raising her up, "I wish it was a Duke :" turning to her mother, she added, "you are unmerciful, mamma. Agnes, my uncle has asked my mother's consent to address you ; and I know she will grant it, so go, my old play-fellow, and make up your matters, to get married as fast as you can."

The poor girl, kissing Gertrude's hand, was glad to retire, and every thing was in train shortly, for casting of two couple, the young ladies not being ashamed to lend their assistance, to reward the fidelity of their protégée.

Mrs. Byron saw no occasion for pressing the business, but Mr. Bowman declared he must be married the same day with his friend and patron, meaning Lord Maldown.

Time slid on gaily, and on Monday a fine new chariot came down, attended by servants in new liveries : a very handsome new sword came also, for the Lieutenant, and a piece of muslin, as a gift to his intended. His Lordship's picture was the only present for Armenia, but her mother and sisters were oppressed by the abundance of elegant trinkets chosen by Lady Sophia, -as suitable to the occasion.

On Wednesday evening, the party being seated in the oak parlour, Cæsar threw open the door, and announced his master, who waving all ceremony, and covered with dirt, flew to his mistress, and holding her in his arms, exclaimed,

"I have too much to say to be methodical ; look at my habit?"

As he was in deep mourning, one might have expected some solemnity of aspect ; but St. Clair was no hypocrite, he had that in his possession he had so long toiled for, though in a different road ; and he would not, or could not, suppress the sentiments

timents which led him to look forward to happiness and Gertrude.

He passed from one to another, until he came to Julia, when looking at her palid countenance,

"Sweet love," said he, "thou too must be made happy."

A faint blush overspread her cheek. Mrs. Byron then asked, "if he had seen Theodore."

"I have, my mother," replied he, "and in three or four months, he will be with us again: A short trip to the continent is prescribed for him, and if his recovery goes on rapidly, we shall see him sooner: he must not write, from the pain in his breast, but I bring abundance of love from him, which I had like to have forgotten."

Part of this little account of Theodore, was certainly apocryphal; but St. Clair could not bear to see the change in Julia, therefore threw in some little cordial, which might turn out ultimately true.

During the time of supper, a dispute arose between Mr. Gordon and St. Clair, concerning who should have the honour of giving away the brides. Gordon pleaded kindred, and St. Clair made a plea of having rode such a length of way, on purpose to arrive in time to officiate as father; but Mr. Bowman ended the difference, by reminding the Captain, he should expect him to fulfil his former promise.

Armenia had retired before supper, and was glad to get away from the exulting joy of Mr. Bowman. She and Agnes supped together, and she could not avoid uttering some expressions of regret, between themselves, at the idea of quitting her friends, on that very day she should most stand in need of their support.

As

As soon as Mrs. Byron came to her chamber, they joined her to say, good night.

The dew drops trickled, spite of all opposition, and fell into the bosom of her mother, who affected a degree of vivacity, she really did not feel.

They separated, after a few minutes conversation, and at eight the next morning, Armenia rose; her dress was simply a light blue riding dress, with white hat and white feathers.

Agnes soon entered her chamber, in a plain fine muslin dress, petticoat and cloak, straw hat, with white ornaments, and a blowfie cap, from under which her beautiful dark locks were suffered to escape.

The vociferation of the Lieutenant, soon summoned the company to meet, and Lord Maldown found his way to Armenia's door, in order to hasten her to the breakfast room.

The sailor missing his friend and patron, as he always termed him, made but five steps to the stair head, where spying his charmer coming out of the chamber with Armenia, he saluted her so heartily, that the report was echoed back from the hall; and then surveying her attire, he squared himself not a little with his new uniform, and sword by his side, as if he meant to say, how completely matched they were.

Agnes was ready to sink into earth, but his Lordship, whose delicacy wished to relieve her, hurried them down to the breakfast room, without any further conversation.

At sight of Mr. Lewis, the curate, and his canonicals, Armenia's colour fled: she strove to swallow her tea, but timidity checked her; and when he announced the time to proceed to church, she shook so as hardly to be able to stand,

Mrs.

Mrs. Byron wanted to say something to support her, but an impediment in her own speech, prevented her.

The Lieutenant observing a something he did not understand, got up, and addressed the company very gravely, observing

"That if any body did not choose to be spliced, it was not too late to be off; for his part, he was ready to go to church directly."

Lord Maldown advanced to Armenia, and presented her with some elegant favours, which he begged her to dispose of, pressing her hand to his lips; at the same time he added,

"Let *this* best gift of love be mine?"

"Not so, my Lord," said St. Clair, "till I please to bestow it on you; so proceed, Mr. Lewis, we are all ready."

Armenia dispersed the favours with a trembling hand, which St. Clair seized, and drew her gently after the clergyman.

Captain Gordon led the blushing Agnes.

Lord Maldown conducted Miss Gordon, and the Lieutenant Miss Julia.

Mrs. Byron and Annette followed in the new carriage, which was to carry off Lord and Lady Maldown, as soon as the ceremony was over; and the procession was closed by a number of servants, and above a hundred of the country people.

When the ceremony begun, Armenia moved her lips, but her voice was extinct. Lord Maldown was clear and solemn; but Mr. Bowman was so loud, particularly in cherishing and comforting, that one might have supposed he had got hold of the speaking trumpet; nobody could resist smiling. His little bride acquitted herself very well.

When

When the clergyman saluted Lady Maldown, (as is the custom of that country) the sailor declared,

" He himself would be foremost in saluting Mrs. Bowman," so taking the first kiss, he afterwards presented her to the company, who all embraced her most affectionately.

The carriage drew up; Lady Maldown clung round her mother's neck; but my Lord knowing any delay would only increase their own distress, put his arms round her waist, and lifting her in it, instantly drove off, while the servants threw handfuls of silver to the gaping rustics, who followed them with blessings, 'till out of sight.

Mrs. Byron staid a few minutes in the vestry, chiding herself for her weakness; Mrs. Bowman was holding the smelling bottle to her nose;

" Remember, my dear," said the former, " in future a mother's feelings shall repay these acts of tenderness."

Mr. St. Clair having heard of the plan of putting them into his cottage, insisted on its still taking place, and added,

" I bestow that, and the furniture, and all its appurtenances, on my well beloved Mrs. Bowman, as a gift for her bridal day, and as soon as the deeds are finished, I promise, before all these present, to deliver them to her."

" And I," said Captain Gordon, " add five hundred pounds ready cash, to be paid by my banker, to her or order, by this draft, presenting Mrs. Bowman with a stamped paper."

" 'Tis not in words to express my gratitude," said that lady, " while I live I shall seek opportunities to deserve such bounty."

The Lieutenant took off his hat, and waving it in the air, gave three cheers,

" I don't

"I don't value the fortune a rope's end," said he, " 'tis the love you bear my wife, makes me hoist my topgallant fails."

The party then adjourned to the cottage, where, by the contrivance of Mrs. Byron, a maid servant and a lad were already fixed, as domestics to the young couple. A very handsome dinner was also prepared, by the same order, at which, with the greatest difficulty, Mrs. Bowman was persuaded to preside, having endeavoured, with all her eloquence, to place Mrs. Byron at the head of the table.

Orwell Manor was literally the house of feasting; the great hall was filled with the village folk, who regaled on sir loins of beef, legs of mutton, and gammon's of bacon, with roasted geese and apple pies, neither was the plum pudding forgotten.

Mrs. Dorcas presided at the top, and farmer Owens at the bottom. Stephen had received an invitation from his maitresse, but Sir Theodore was ill.—Torn between love and duty, gratitude upset the balance, and the latter prevailed—Stephen preferred the house of mourning to the house of feasting.

The harp played all dinner time, and a country dance succeeded.

The cottage party joined them after dinner, where the Lieutenant danced with his bride, spite of the reprehensions of Captain Gordon, who claimed that privilege.

Mrs. Byron led off one dance with Mr. St. Clair, in honour of the day, and it concluded with every emblem of joy and festivity, supping all together in the great hall; after which the gentlemen, and villagers, with the harper in front, conducted

conducted Mr. and Mrs. Bowman to the happy mansion.

Where we will leave them, being desirous ourselves of taking a short trip to Bristol.

Numbers of letters were exchanged between Sir Theodore and Mr. Mandville, though none could offer the smallest alleviation to the ill that existed, as none could devise how to extricate them from their difficulties.

A participation of sorrows, are said to lighten them, but in this case, it was an additional wound, to communicate the most painful sensations to an affectionate father, without reaping any advantage but what candor must supply.

St. Clair did not fail to write constantly from the Manor, and the accounts he transcribed of the events passing there, was the only solace Mr. Mandville was capable of receiving.

He heard Julia was affected by his absence, though her health seemed not injured; and the pale cheek, and half stifled sigh, was not forgotten by St. Clair, who, lively in descriptions, brought her figure so forcibly upon his friend's imagination, that he was ready to fall at the feet of his divinity.

This correspondence was a means of delaying the removal of Mr. Mandville: he heard twice, at least ever week, from Orwell Manor; the further he removed, the less frequent would be this intelligence; and if a spur from Sir Theodore had not roused him, he would certainly have lingered on in his present abode.

The Baronet dreaded the arrival of Mrs. B—— in England, and he thought the plea of his son's health, requiring a residence on the continent, might be urged as a reason for a delay, at least, to the

the dreaded ceremony, from whence no retreat could be made.

The necessity of his departure so forcibly appeared, that Mr. Mandville could not refuse any longer; and after receiving letters of recommendation to Lord J. Raymond, and some other people of fashion at Paris, from Sir Theodore, he proceeded, by easy stages, to Dover, writing every evening, before he went to bed, to St. Clair.

In this employment, he wrought up his mind to believe he was seated, after supper, with the family at Orwell Manor, and recounting the transactions and occurrences of the day.

It is not to be easily conceived, the comfort this delusion afforded him; his sleep was sweeter, and he was sure to follow the conception by some delightful dream, where no frightful point of honour stood before him, but peace and love invited him to Julia.

C H A P. XXXVII.

ST. CLAIR wrote on, day by day also; so when Theodore arrived at Dover, he had the satisfaction to receive an immense packet, quite unexpectedly, which served him as a companion in the rest of his journey to Paris.

As Sir Theodore's constitution was naturally good, and Mrs. Gordon and Stephen were two excellent

excellent nurses, it was not long before he regained his strength; as to spirits, he had a gravity dispersed through the whole expression of the face, which obscured the bright beams of benevolence, that were the harbingers of the soul.

His chief delight now was in his library; he saw no company, nor had he ventured from the house, 'till Captain Gordon returned from Orwell Manor.

The lively account that gentleman gave of Mrs. Byron's new found relation, and the double wedding, produced a satisfaction in the mind of his hearer.

The Baronet loved Armenia, and Lord Maldown; he saw every prospect of happiness, from their similarity of dispositions, and felt an inward joy at being the means of bringing them together.

His little Agnes; his nurse too.

"I will not be ungrateful," said he, "her first son shall be called Theodore."

On the fourth day from their departure, Lord and Lady Maldown arrived at Richmond, and the Dowager received her timid daughter with that sort of welcome, that soon banished every terror.

Lady Sophia had been married on the same day with her brother, and was gone on a tour for one week.

Every thing appeared to Armenia like enchantment; the scene struck her with delight; the kindness with which Lady Maldown received her; the exulting tenderness of her husband; the noble apartments: in short, the combination of circumstances all together, made her scarce imagine it to be reality, and her spirits became absolutely

absolutely oppressed, from the unusual flow of delight.

She took an opportunity, next day to beg his Lordship, if possible, to prevent her being hurried into company, and she had the pleasure of being informed, by her new mother,

"That not until a week after Lady Sophia's return, would the ceremonials begin, usual on these occasions."

Armenia composed her mind, and sat down to give her friends at Orwell Manor, some faint idea of the happiness she enjoyed.

I dare say, reader, you must be anxious to know what share of good fortune came to your favourite, Mr. St. Clair.

Then, I am to inform you, he had no share at all of his good Uncle's property.

"Was he too late in his arrival?" you say, "he got to Trelogan a day and a night before the departure of this British worthy, who as soon as he was informed that his nephew was come, commanded him into his presence; as he entered the chamber,

"Augustus," said the worn out kinsman, "when last I saw you, I was a comely strong man, thou a stripling; I am now dim with infirmity—dreadful reverse! let me feel you, that I may realize my fancy?—that beauty is thy mother's? that vigour thy father's: I have done thee ill boy! can you forgive? take this paper, I am fatigued? stay by me, it will buy my pardon?"

He rested, and St. Clair, who was really affected, bowed his forehead down on the hand that delivered the parchment, which shook with debility.

Regaining a little strength, he continued,

"Open

"Open it," said he, "may I see before I die, that thou art reconciled?"

His nephew looked at the few words which first presented themselves, viz. "I give and bequeath the *whole* of my property, without reservation, to my nephew, Augustus St. Clair."

St. Clair, instead of sinking in heroics on one knee, with a manly gratitude, sealed his reconciliation, and proceeded to inform his uncle of his success in India, and his late misfortune.

The old gentleman, after he had supped, requested his nephew not to leave him, but take his repose on a couch in the apartment. The next day Mr. Blake grew better, set up in his bed, talked much, and eat something, and so he continued until the succeeding evening, but there his earthly perigrination finished, for the ominous number three, was verified by a returning fit, which fit made Augustus as rich as a Nabob.

He had written to Miss Gordon, but had not communicated his good fortune, reserving "the morceau precieux," for his own mouth, at their meeting.

He soon set about regulating the family; he retained two of the oldest domestics still in his service; gave *all* five pounds, and a suit of mourning, though not a legacy was left for any one; and was revolving whether to keep, or let the farm; when a letter from Gertrude informed him no time was to be lost, if he intended to be present, as Thursday was to be the day of weddings.

St. Clair left the care of the farm for other moments, and set off directly, winged on each side by love and friendship.

As soon as the bustle was over, Augustus reminded his mistress, he had served over and over, his state of probation, and he now thought himself privileged to claim her as his own.

Gertrude

Gertrude consented, but begged to delay the nuptial ceremony a month or two, as her mother had not intirely conquered the separation from Armenia.

St. Clair was impatient of this delay, and accused her of indifference.

She smiled, and bade him think of that in his cooler reflection.

He told her he did not give it up; but the dispute for that time was ended, by the arrival of Sir Theodore, and Mr. and Mrs. Gordon.

Poor Julia was very much affected at the meeting, as it was unexpected; she could not subdue her sensations; but as no painful comfort was attempted by her friends, she recovered, by its not seeming to have been observed.

As the Baronet proposed spending some weeks at the Manor, we cannot quit them at a more proper time, hoping Mr. Stephen will make a good use of it with Miss Dorcas, Je prens conge, and with my swimming girdle, skim the deep to Calais, then mount my baloon, and am at Paris.

"I find you are much better already," said I, (looking at Mr. Theodore Mandville, as he got up from the hand of his valet de chambre,) "you have certainly preserved these good looks for the French ladies, and worn your thread-bare face only in England."

He walked up to the glass; took out his white handkerchief; perfumed the air, and looking down on his legs, and elegant buckles, asked for his carriage.

I, (being invisible) walked down stairs with him, and heard the words, Lord J. Raymond, upon which I took the liberty of being a guest at that assembly, walking close at the elbow of Mr. Mandville.

Lord John embraced him, according to the manners of France, and presented him to the charming Marquise, and then to a number of pretty, lively, irresistible women of condition, that all seemed disposed to welcome this amiable cavalier.

He conducted himself most bewitchingly, to be sure; for a languor still hung about him, that gave the most fascinating softness to all he said, and each particular lady supposed she herself was the cause of it.

Theodore saw he was destined, by the determination of more than one, for the honourable post of Cecisbeo; but his natural gallantry was subdued by so refined an affection, that he could not have even feigned those affiduities to one woman, though general, in his attentions to all. He was in the train of the Marquise as often as possible, because he saw she doated on her husband, for whom he had conceived the greatest friendship, and by seeming to attach himself to her, he was delivered from a set of coquettes, he had not, at present, vivacity to play off.

He was invited to the first hotels in Paris, but seldom went, unless to meet Lord John.

The moment drew nigh, when he might expect intelligence from Mr. Butler, and he grew anxious and uneasy; his complaints seemed again to threaten him, which the Marquise perceiving, invited him to visit a Villa of her's near Marli, to meet a few chosen friends.

Mr. Mandville consented to join in this excursion, which was to take place in a day or two.

As he was a passionate admirer of music, he frequently spent some part of the evening at the Opera, previous to his joining his party. Having stayed later than usual this evening, on account of
a famous

a famous singer, he ordered his carriage home immediately, finding late hours very pernicious to him.

As the streets are extremely narrow, his carriage drew very near the houses, to let another pass, and stopping for an instant, some person fell almost against the wheels, as if thrown from a staircase. Mr. Mandville pulled the check string, and ordered his servant to raise up the man, lest he should be hurt, which he did, at the same time saying, "he believed he was dead."

Theodore desired the door might be opened, and getting out, ordered them to take care of the man, while he advanced to the passage, which was not three feet from the stairs, that were dark and narrow; the servant however followed with the flambeau, and his master went to the top, where were two doors, one to the right, and another to the left; he did not stay to deliberate, but knocked, without much ceremony, at one of them; nobody answered, but it was plain people were within hearing, by a confusion of murmurs, and clapping too of inward doors. He again thundered, but finding admission was not to be gained that way, he put too his shoulder, with all its force, and subdued the barrier.

On his entrance, he saw several ill looking men, retiring as fast as possible; but at his feet (barring his entrance) lay one really dead. He called to those that were retreating, to stop, when the door on the stairs, on the opposite side, quickly opened, and a pistol was presented at the back of Mr. Mandyville.

Robert, who held the flambeau, seeing the aim taken, at the time Theodore was turning the corpse, to try if life was entirely fled, dashed it flaming in the villain's face, and snatched the pistol from him; then begging his master to retreat,

before it was too late, he followed him down stairs backwards, with the pistol cock'd and presented, until they got into the street.

Mr. Mandville finding the man that had fallen, was not dead, had him put into his own carriage, covered as he was with blood and dirt, and proceeded to his hotel, ruminating all the way on his own escape, and convinced he had before seen the face of the unfortunate corpse.

As soon as Theodore reached home, he ordered the wounded man to be conveyed to a bed; and sending information of the affair to the officers of the police, waited below until the surgeon, who lived in the next street, made his appearance.

They then went together, to look at this object of compassion and distress, who muttered some words on their entering. The surgeon, with great difficulty, cleared his visage of a quantity of long hair, which, from being in loose disorder at the time of his reversion, clotted together over his face, by the effusion of blood, so that the features were undistinguishable.

No sooner was this veil of horror removed, than Mr. Mandville recognized the unworthy, though now pitiable, Charles Wentworth.

He forbore to give any token of surprize, but charging the surgeon to examine carefully into the state of his patient, and bring him an account, before he left the house. He retired to recollect himself from his astonishment.

He now remembered the wretched victim of iniquity, in the person of M'Dermot, who luckily lay as a stumbling block, to prevent his entering that room; from which, had he entered, he never would have returned.

By what strange fate was he bound to preserve a life, that had committed such injuries against her

her he loved? was it to give him a more glorious recompence than revenge?—it must be so. Teach me, monitor Divine, to feel another's woe, and by my mercy, earn the mercy shewn to me.

Theodore returned to the chamber: the surgeon had not yet done; he advanced, not supposing he could be known by a man in such a state; when a sort of scream, accompanied by desiring the surgeon to save him from the phantom, was uttered by Wentworth.

"Fear nothing," said Theodore, "there are none but friends about you, who wish to preserve your life; I have risked mine this night to save yours, preserve it, therefore, by submitting to be quiet."

"I shall be imprisoned for life," said Wentworth.

Mr. Mandville turned to the surgeon, and imputed the words to the concussion, occasioned by the fall, willing to avoid exposing this wretched unfortunate, to the scorn of the stranger.

"I know I must go to Newgate," added he, "and I had better die; my father will break his heart.

"Pray, sir," said the surgeon, "let us get you to bed, you will be better."

"Oh lovely, cruel Julia," rejoined Wentworth, "I would suffer for you all torments, but I shall never hear your voice—you sentence me to chains and infamy."

Theodore was melted like a woman at his words: he besought him to be pacified, and lay down; he told him he would watch by him himself; for nothing could, or should happen, to distress him."

Wentworth endeavoured to rise, and go to the bed; Mr. Mandville sprung forward to support him. Wentworth looked at him, and then began

to

to cry like a child. After which he took some medicine, that lulled him to sleep the rest of the night, and Theodore retired to his chamber, to enjoy those exquisite sensations, formed by the result of generous actions.

The next morning he dispatched a packet to Sir Theodore, begging him to take the task upon himself to inform Lord Orwell of this event, declaring his intentions of endeavouring to work a reformation in this bewildered, inconsiderate young man, fatally sacrificed to early indulgence, and neglected principles.

"If I ever have a son," said Sir Theodore, "and he proves a dunce, I will forgive him, but the *smallest* error of morals, shall meet the scourge of my resentment."

"Very proper indeed," said Lord J. Raymond, entering the room; "to whom are you preaching such excellent documents?"

"Even to myself," rejoined Theodore, "you will scarce believe I should write them to my father."

"What did you do last night, Mandville? we expected you; my wife was quite au desespoir."

"I feel very much inclined to tell you," said Theodore, "but it must go no further."

"Upon my honour," said his Lordship, "you know I am tender of women's reputation"

"Pshaw," rejoined Theodore, "it is a serious matter, though you make me smile."

"My father, in his correspondence, gave you the history of some faux pas, in the conduct of Lord Orwell's youngest son."

"With my lovely Julia?" added his Lordship; "certainly! I can never forget that!"

Mandville reddened.

"Why don't you go on?" said my Lord.

"Faith,"

"Faith," rejoined the other, "you have broke the thread ; but I saved his life last night, that's all, and I have him in the house now."

"What a prisoner ? egad that's clever, I think we will not spare him now we have him. But Lord Orwell, he has a noble soul ; one need not hang the fellow, Botany Bay will do."

Theodore laugh'd at the hasty decision of poor Wentworth's fate, and then went into every particular concerning him, and his own resolutions for his future conduct.

Lord John was very desirous of visiting Wentworth, (as he said) to see how he would behave, but Theodore prevented him, lest any appearance of exulting at his misery, might be misconstrued.

After promising to join his friend, and the Marquise at dinner, they separated, and Mr. Mandville went to the sick man, who was wonderfully recovered.

The surgeon pronounced the wounds to be more painful than dangerous ; and if no fever appeared, a few days would bring him about again.

Wentworth was now very desirous of acknowledging his gratitude to Mr. Mandville, for (on enquiry of the servants) he had heard all the occurrences which happened the last night after his fall.

He deplored the fate of poor M'Dermot, though he owned it was him that had led him into every vice and folly, even to the dissipation of his whole fortune ; and in order to supply their necessity, he had carried him to that notorious gambling house, with the hope of meeting some one they could pigeon. That having engaged with one, who was disguised like a foreigner, they were soon in his debt, to a considerable amount, and having

ing nothing wherewith to discharge their losses, an assault had followed.

The villain had drawn a poignard, which M'Dermot endeavouring to wrest out of his hand, received into his breast. That he himself had made for the stairs, but M'Dermot falling at his feet, impeded him, and he instantly felt himself seized by more than one, and thrown with such violence, that he lost all sense of what followed, before he reached the street.

The remorse that Wentworth suffered, seemed to threaten more mischief, than the wounds he laboured under, and he continually talked of his offended father, praying Mr. Mandville to intercede with him for pardon, which Mandville promising with sincerity to do, left him to fulfil his engagement.

After dining at Lord J. Raymond's, the Marquise proposed going to the comedie; she was attended by her usual suite, and after a hundred bows and curtseys, they observed a handsome young Englishman, whose face was quite new at Paris. Lord John (who never loved his country so well, as when out of it) was not easy until he found out the name of the stranger; and soon after seeing the Chevalier Belanie shake him by the hand, he left the loge, to satisfy his curiosity through his means.

"It is Milor Bellarmine," replied the Chevalier, "shall I present him to you?"

"Most willingly," said his Lordship, "I know his father extremely well; Lord Orwell is my particular friend."

The Frenchman then brought them acquainted, and they all returned to the loge of the Marquise, to pay their compliments to her, and add another acquaintance, in the person of young Theodore.

C H A P. XXXVIII.

THIS new occurrence, made a great change in the plan of Mr. Mandville, as to the arrangements of poor Wentworth; but he took care (until he consulted him) not to mention to Lord Bellarmine, any thing leading to the matter.

The two strangers returned to sup at Lord John's, and Lord Bellarmine invited the gentlemen to breakfast at eleven the next morning.

As early as was convenient, Mr. Mandville attended the invalid, and finding his recovery still more advanced, he informed him of Lord Bellarmine's being at Paris.

Theodore was sorry to see no degree of pleasure expressed in the countenance of a brother, on such an information; but soon found that Charles Wentworth had, at an early period, given his brother a disgust, never yet done away.

To bring about a reconciliation, was a business fit for Mr. Mandville, and after sounding the offender, he found him ready to acknowledge his misconduct, and truly penitent for all former follies.

Theodore joined the breakfast party at the appointed time, and when they had discussed the common talk of the day, and drawn comparisons between London, Rome and Paris, he contrived to get Lord John to engage the Chevalier in a ramble, while he invited Lord Bellarmine to go with him in his carriage to St. Germain.

After observations on the beauty of the morning, Theodore began prefacing his discourse by a

sentimental harangue, then sliding by gentle gradations, into the fine feelings of his heart. He gave him to understand the misfortunes of his brother, veiling, as much as he was able, his vices, under the shade of youth and imprudence.

"And is he with *you*?" said Lord Bellarmine, "have *you* afforded him an asylum? that ought to crush him. My father has informed me of all his baseness, and also, that the lady he so infamously stole away, was shortly to become your wife."

"That," answered Theodore, in the utmost perturbation, "must all be forgotten, in his present condition; his contrition has done away the offence."

"Shall I, that am his brother, be less forgiving than you, who he has deeply injured? you have already given me a lesson, Mr. Mandville, which I must have by heart; accept my friendship, and give me your's in return. I have much to learn, do you instruct me? in the vortex I have moved the last three years; I have never thought at all."

"Do not think now," said Theodore, "but follow the impulse of your own heart, and you cannot err; there are few guides that will direct your steps so properly, I receive the greatest satisfaction in healing the breach between you and your brother; suffer me to conduct you to him directly?"

His lordship consented to the proposal, so the excursion was deferred, and the horses heads turned again towards Paris.

When they arrived at Mr. Mandville's hotel, Lord Bellarmine felt some degree of agitation. He was going to meet his brother; that brother, who probably must have perished in the streets, but for the humanity of Theodore. The son of

Lord

Lord Orwell must have died for want, in that city, where his brother had lavished thousands.

This retrospect worked upon the mind of Lord Bellarmine, and he became impatient to do away his own neglect.

The variety of names Mr. Wentworth bore, and the different characters he undertook, (at the instigation of M'Dermot) made it hardly possible to get intelligence of him, for he never stayed long any where, as much from the restlessness of his temper, as from the necessity of escaping inquiry, so that all the researches that had been, and were still making, after him, proved fruitless; yet Wentworth being found by another, made his Lordship accuse himself of neglect.

Mr. Mandville conducted him to the chamber, after preparing poor Charles for the interview, where he left them together, not wishing to witness a scene, that would add one more unpleasant sensation to the many he was already burthened with.

His anxiety for a letter from Mr. Butler, became almost torture, and had it not been for the foregoing occupations, which had taken up his mind, it is more than probable he would have had a serious return of his former complaints.

He waited only for settling Charles Wentworth, to avail himself of the invitation given him by the charming Marquise, indulging a hope, that variety of scene might deaden the acuteness of his feelings.

Lord Bellarmine did not join Mr. Mandville for at least two hours, and when he did, appeared very much chagrined, and out of spirits.

"I am very much hurt," said his Lordship, "at the account poor Charles gives of his late manner of living; I hope my father will never know it. He is very desirous of setting about his reformation,

reformation, and seriously asked me, if the living, Lord Orwell has in gift, was vacant, as he should go to Oxford, and begin his studies, as soon as he was at liberty to appear in England. Unfortunate fellow! I think his head is more in fault than his heart. I have promised to take him under my protection, until he is well, and will come in the evening in my carriage to fetch him: in the mean time, believe me, I can never repay your kindness; assist me in my applications to the relations of the lady, that he may run no risk in going to England, and then make me capable of returning your goodness, for you only have the power to awaken the mind by your own example, to uncommon sentiments of liberality."

"In that case, my good friend," rejoined Theodore, "I command you to say no more on that matter, so I shall go and take leave of the poor penitent, and then join my lovely Marquise, in order to proceed, for some days, to her villa."

"By the time you return," said his Lordship, "I shall probably be gone, for I shall set off with this lad, as soon as he can bear the journey. I envy you the society of that delightful woman," continued he, "but you are such a philosopher, you see her as if she was a picture."

"I see her as the picture of my friend's wife," rejoined Theodore, "I have already paid a debt to gallantry, that has ruined me."

"You have been taken in, I suppose," rejoined his Lordship, "but I thought, in these times, the costs always fell to the ladies share."

"You mistake me," said Theodore, "I would give up all my fortune, and rejoice at the terms, if I could cease to think—to harrass up my mind, that such things are. But excuse me I must look no more that way, if I mean to be company for any one but a Monk of La Trappe."

Lord

Lord Bellarmine proposed being set down by Mr. Mandville, in his road to Lord John's; the carriage was ordered, and they went out together, his Lordship to his banker, and Theodore to his appointment.

A very select party waited for him, enough to fill three carriages, and after dining, they took the road to Marli; from whence, half a league removed, stood the villa of the Marquise. Would it amuse you, reader, to hear of woods, temples, jet d'eaus, parterres, statue, and fish ponds; if I thought it were not a hackney'd description, you should have it; but as this villa was as beautiful as these appurtenances could make it, what does it signify how I arrange them, unless I gave you a perspective view of it, which my poverty at present hinders me from doing.

Here was Theodore conveyed, to get rid of a love fit; groves, streams lawns and rivers, all conspire in the cure, particularly when a noble pavillion contains such heavenly musick, as to melt the very soul; where the vibration of the dying note swims the imagination to elysium, and the full band calls it back again to transport.

Such was his situation—and I shall leave him to enjoy it, while I return to those friends I am so partial to, at Orwell Manor.

Mr. St. Clair had borne, with no great degree of patience, the many delays to the consummation of his wishes; he saw no sort of occasion for his being made unhappy, because circumstances had rendered some of his friends so; nor could he suppose it any alleviation to their distress, to see him made uneasy, by causeless objections, when fate had relented of its own accord, and laid the road smooth and even for him.

He complained to Sir Theodore of the unnecessary

cessary delay, who entering into a conspiracy with him, and some others of the family, Gertrude was forced to name a day, and prepare for the nuptial ceremony, which was at length fixed for that day fortnight.

The constant accounts received by the Baronet and St. Clair, from Theodore, with every particular he took the pains to inform them of, became the veritable *beaume de vie* to Julia: she was grave, 'tis true, and sometimes very low spirited; but as soon as those letters arrived, the new dose animated her, and she mingled in the conversation, in her usual engaging manner.

About this time St. Clair received a letter from Mr. Butler, dated St. Helena, who having written to Mr. Mandville, had also run the chance of one to St. Clair, not being certain whether he had, or had not, accompanied his friend abroad.

It was delivered to him before the whole company, who were at dinner in the oak parlour, when eyeing the foreign post mark on the cover, his impatience outstepped his politeness, and he broke it open.

He half read it, and then putting it into his pocket,

"Take away my plate," said he to Cæsar, I've done.

His eyes darted fire, and he seemed scarce able to contain himself, waiting upon thorns 'till the servants were withdrawn, and the table cleared. He then arose, and begging a few minutes of private conversation with the Baronet, they retired, and St. Clair pull'd out the letter, and read the contents; they were hastily written, and purport-ed as follows.

Mr. Butler arrived a few hours before the ship that convey'd the letter, departed—his first inquiry

quiry had been after the residence of the widow; he was shewn to one of the best houses in the place, and rang at a bell; an Indian woman open'd the door, and he then asked for the lady.

"Are you come from England?" said the Indian.

"I am in haste to speak with the lady," rejoined Mr. Butler.

"Is Mr. Mandville come?" said the girl.

"No, but I must see Mrs. B——," answered he, pushing by her, into the house. As no other domestics were to be seen, he again halted, and was going to renew his desire of speaking to her mistress, when the cry of a young infant quickened the pace of the portress, who in her turn push'd by, and entered a lower apartment, taking from a cradle a lovely infant, richly dress'd. 'The doctor pondered; it could not be her's; it was remarkably fair; he ask'd her whose it was?"

"I will tell you nothing, 'till I know who *you* are," replied she.

"Nor I gratify you, 'till I see your mistress," said the doctor.

"She is gone away," said the wench.

"'Tis not true," said the doctor, "or why this child here? is it not her's?"

"'Tis my Theodora," rejoined the footy nymph.

The doctor smiled.

"I have letters for your lady," said he.

"If you come from Mr. Mandville, I will speak, if not, go your way, I have nothing to say to you."

Mr. Butler judging, from the silence throughout the mansion, that there might be some truth in what she had advanced, gave up his first plan, and owned he came from Mr. Mandville.

He then understood from the nurse, that the widow

widow had quitted St. Helena, about six weeks before: that she had sent all her Indian servants, except herself, back to India; that she had paid six months advance for the rent of the house, and left this lovely infant to her care, 'till inquiry should be made concerning them. That an agent had been employed to give her money, when what she had left her was exhausted, and by a strict oath charged her not to part with the child, 'till delivered to the care of Mr. Mandville ;" she added, " that her lady was gone to Portugal, with the design of entering a religious house, in order, after her probation, to take the veil; her acquaintance with the superior of the English nunnery at Lisbon, had induced her to fix on that part of the world for her retirement.

Mr. Butler added no more in this letter, than to assure him, he should embark in the next ship with his Asiatic princess, and the infant, for England, in order to give substantial proofs of the success of his embassy.

Sir Theodore lifted up his eyes and hands, but St. Clair disturbed the silent ejaculation, by embracing him with all his heart, which was returned with the utmost cordiality, and it was some time before either of them were fit to join the company.

The countenance of Sir Theodore was so illumined with joy, that congratulations flew at him from all corners, though no one knew the cause of this change. He received them very gratefully and promised a participation of his pleasure, when he could come to cool reflection. About an hour after, he retired to write to Theodore, but was interrupted on the way, by St. Clair, who proposed to the Baronet, if he could persuade Gertrude

true to their being married immediately, their setting off for Paris to congratulate his friend.

"The idea is excellent, and worthy of you," said the Baronet, "and if I can persuade her mother, we will strengthen the party, by adding ourselves, Mr. and Mrs. Gordon, Julia, and Annette to it."

"This shall be agitated, after I have communicated to that good lady the story of my son; she is the most proper person in this family to account to, for the singularity of his conduct, heretofore so mysterious; may it heal every wound; and I sincerely pray the information may convey happiness to one, who so greatly deserves it. To-morrow morning shall be devoted to this business; I shall meet you presently at supper. I now go to write a short letter to my son."

They then separated, and St. Clair returned to the company. Mrs. Gordon attacked him directly;

"You are in the secret," said she, "something concerning my brother, has given you all this joy; I do verily think, by some hints I have collected, that he left a wife in India, whose death you are rejoicing at, for I have been long certain, Theodore had something heavy at his heart, and by the weight, judged it a matrimonial clog."

"Very well, Alicia," said Mr. Gordon.

"I am very jealous of my father's not making me a confidant," continued the lady, "perhaps he thought I would tell my husband, but I shall never tell him any thing; I hope I have not forgot bon ton, though I've not seen dear London these nine or ten months."

"To-morrow will be a day for the ladies," replied St. Clair, "the budget will be opened, and such a feast for curiosity be serv'd, that keen as your

your hunger may be for explanation, you will hear what will take you a month to digest—of the wonderful, surprising —”

“ Nay, but give us a hint,” rejoined Mrs. Gordon.

“ Well, then, how many kisses will you give me?” answered St. Clair.

“ Pshaw,” said the lady.”

“ I must stop your mouth, if you won’t be refus’d,” added he.

“ I must box your ears,” said she, slapping him with her fan.

“ And I must call you out,” said George Gordon, “ so come along,” and they strolled down, by the light of the moon, to Mr. Bowman’s, who was playing cribbage with his wife, and envied not the King of Morocco.

The next day a cabinet council was held, and Mrs. Byron was made a *Free Mason* of; she failed not to communicate the secret to her fair daughters, as soon as was convenient; and now the lovely Julia saw the sun of her bright hopes burst from the cloud, that had so long obscur’d it; she look’d at it ’till its brilliancy brought the tear into her eye, and when it fell, ’twas tributary to the sorrows of the penitent Mrs. B.—

The next business brought before the house, was the motion for an address to be presented, humbly praying, that the time of one fortnight’s preparation, should be abridged to two, three, or four days, at farthest, and that all preliminaries should be adjusted, articles signed, and union ratified by the priest, between Gertrude and St. Clair before the expiration of that time. This met great opposition, but upon Sir Theodore bringing forward his motion for the Paris journey, it was carried without a dissenting voice.

Stephen

Stephen was ordered off, to arrange things for the tour and the travelling coach was again to be set a going.

St. Clair sent off post, to hurry his new carriage down against the time, and every thing was soon in a most delightful bustle, for the Captain also was appointed to the command of the Favourite Sloop of War, who was to be fitted for sea with the utmost expedition; Lord Maldown had not forgot his promise, though still in love.

Tuesday—the happy Tuesday came; four carriages, with each four horses, drew up. St. Clair's new bay hunters snorted on the field, and scarce would be withheld.

Gertrude appeared—her dress was of light taffety, fastened at the breast by one diamond stud, which was all that confined it at top; round the waist pass'd three times a twisted turban fash, of the finest muslin; her hat or cap was something between a helmet and the bonnet de voyage, partly white fattin, partly turban muslin, with falling white feathers.

She would have preferred a riding dress, but St. Clair had an aversion to that Amazonian attire.

Sir Theodore handed her into her own carriage, and conducted her to the church; the rest of the party were arranged for the journey, only in return, St. Clair changed places with the Baronet.

The hands were united that made the hearts glad, and Sir Theodore bestowed a gift, that never lost its value with St. Clair.

It was very necessary to inform the spectators, they should be back again in a month, otherwise, instead of rejoicings, there would have been nothing but weeping and gnashing of teeth.

After the sincerest compliments from all parties, St. Clair commenced Benedict, by placing himself

himself beside his wife; the Baronet got into his own coach, and the Abigail's, namely, Misses Dorcas and Lucy, brought up the rear, with Albert riding beauty, while Stephen, John and Cæsar, made up the suite.

There certainly never were so many happy people together, as this travelling groupe; every thing they saw or heard, was delightful, because they were in a humour to be pleas'd; and though they were three days getting to London, nobody seemed tired; no one ask'd how many miles to ——, or was heard to complain how slow the postillions drove: indeed, to say the truth, they went as fast as horses could draw them, but when they stop'd to refresh, they made no very hasty meals, consequently, time gallop'd, though they stood still.

At London they went in at Hyde-Park, and out at Westminster-Bridge, without even knocking at Lord Orwell's door, as the consequence of such a bon jour, would have offended Lord and Lady Duncairn, and fifty other Lords and Ladies, who had not seen Mrs. Gordon since her change of condition; and I must confess, between friends, that change began to be very apparent in the lady, by way of adding another little heap to their pile of happiness.

C H A P. XXXIX.

MR. Theodore Mandville had been long enough at Petit Paradis, to prove the inefficacy of his efforts to amuse his mind; he forsook the walks, and took

took to the library, where he was lost for hours together, as it was a place seldom visited by Lord John, who spent those moments (free from actual pleasure) in elegant contrivances, and new inventions, to delight his friends.

After some days of weary existence, Mr. Mandville proposed returning to Paris, as he got no better in the country. This plan was very ill received by his kind hosts ; they talked of variety of scene—they would have a hunt—a wild boar should be started—the game also should be visited—partridges and pheasants should pay for their presumption, in feeding almost under your feet—fishing also ; but that again was too cold. Thus they went on, racking their invention, when Robert arrived, and sent in the packet.

Theodore could not speak, but hastily retiring to his room, burst open the letters, and the first line he read, was “Joy to my friends ;” his hasty eye glanced over every line, with that eager perturbation, that it was impossible the imagination could make any thing connected of it. After undergoing three separate perusals, his understanding forced itself through the muddy disturbed channel, and began to flow clear enough to comprehend the substance of the information.

“Am I a father then ?” said Theodore, “Gracious powers ! Am I also free ? Oh divine Julia ! Can it be true ?”

He again looked at the paper, “lovely female infant, a Theodora !” he started up, and clasped his hands—then sunk into a chair, and read again.

“Gone to Portugal to become a nun ;” Theodore rested his elbow on his knee, and his forehead on his hand, the other foot vibrating pat, pat, pat, with great vehemence. “What have I done

I done?" exclaimed he, " my indifference has destroyed her peace; can I deserve happiness, that have dealt such premeditated misery to another? unhappy woman, whose tenderness met such reward —torn from every joy, youth, beauty and wealth could give thee—torn from thy infant, dearer than either, a voluntary victim, art thou gone, to weep, and pray, and mortify: to think on Theodore, and curse the thought that haunts thee, even where thou fled'st for peace? Distraction, I cannot bear the thought!"

A servant rapped at the door, with the compliments of the Marquise, and she begged Mr. Mandville's attendance to join the company, who were expected every instant. Theodore returned for answer,

" He was much indisposed, but would endeavour to be down to dinner."

Lord John hearing the message that was delivered to his wife, went hastily to Theodore's apartment. Entering, he said,

" For heaven's sake, my dear Mandville, what is the matter? why won't you be yourself? pray come down? my wife's brother, and his bride, are coming to us; they only reached Paris last night, and their courier en avant is just arrived, to say they will be here directly."

" Hark! I hear the carriage at the gate," and stepping to the window, he continued, " let us take the first view, as she descends from her coach? 'tis a most magnificent one truly."

Mandville drew to the window, and casting his eyes on the lady, as the Count handed her out, he beheld his so lately deplored Mrs. B——. He fixed his eyes, his head grew dizzy, and he fell his whole length along the floor.

Lord

Lord John rang the bell, and raising up his friend, stood over him in the greatest alarm.

He sent immediately for a surgeon, but Theodore grew better; his eyes lost their languor, he laughed at Lord John's anxiety about him; talked in an incoherent sort of style, and ordered his carriage, with the design to go to Paris immediately.

" You shall not, cannot go, Mandville," said Lord John, you are in a raging fever; your head wanders; where is the surgeon? fellow, go for another."

Theodore, much affected with the anxiety of Lord John, consented to remain 'till the next day, but begged no company might be admitted to him.

The surgeon found his pulse much agitated, so he took about twelve ounces of blood from the arm, ordered a warm bath for the feet, and a bouillon du veau, and then decamped on light fantastic toe, for his next patient.

It was not without great persuasion, Lord John quitted Theodore, although several summonses had been given him; at length, seeing him safe in bed, he went to pay his compliments to his new relations.

Mr. Mandville wished for nothing so much as to be alone; his astonishment had deprived him of the power of reflection; but now the inconstancy, not to say the depravity, of one so prone to change—one who could break the tender tie of mother, and practise such hypocrisy to veil it, raised in his mind such just contempt, he almost wished her doom was what she seemed it; yet he determined not to expose her; to-morrow, before light, unknown to any one, he meant to leave the house,

house, and if his health admitted, pursue his journey to his native shore.

Here he was interrupted by the Marquise, who could not rest 'till she had visited her cher ami. She told Mandville he was un pauvre malheureux, not to be able to come to see her sister.

" Do you know ?" added she, " her heart is so tender, that when my Lord told me how sick you were, and that you had fallen, she turned quite pale, and prayed my Lord to make you keep your room."

" Such kindness to a stranger," replied Mandville, is indeed extraordinary.

" But you are not very bad," said the Marquise, we will take our coffee with you."

Not for the world," cried Theodore, " my fever is very high, and perhaps contagious : suffer no one to come near me, for a day or two at least."

" You are hypochondriac," said the lady, taking his hand, " you have no fever ; take some wine, and let us come ? we shall cure you."

" Oh my head," rejoined Theodore, " talking destroys me ; bind it up, Robert, and bring in the warm bath."

The Marquise retired, not without giving obert a hint, to administer wine instead of wa-

As soon as the lady quitted the room, Theodore arose, and calling for his pen and ink, wrote a letter to Lord John, pleading business, intelligence which his packet had conveyed, being the cause of his hurrying from them," and added, " as he must go for England immediately, he spared himself the pain of taking leave of friends, who were too near his heart, to quit with indifference."

" He

" He then desired Robert to be secret in his orders concerning the carriage, but to be sure to have it ready at six in the morning."

The various sentiments that had torn our hero in the day, added to his miraculous escape from destruction or remorse, hindered him from that necessary repose he stood in need of, under his present weakness.

Mr. Mandville did not require a cannon to be fired to awaken him : at day break he arose, left his letter on the table, and getting into his post chaise, was soon at Paris.

He sent to his bankers for letters, and to Lord Bellarmine, but the latter was gone to England with his brother. Sir Theodore's congratulatory letter was delivered to him, but as no hint was given of their intended journey, Mr. Mandville ordered an early dinner, and set off for Chantilly, on his way to England.

He was ill, in spite of a joyful heart ; his long sufferings had preyed on his health, and it was not one day of prosperity that could restore it. He found, as he drew near Chantilly, that he was tired ; the blood he had lost, indeed did not make him much the stronger, so he concluded, in his own mind, to sleep there.

When he arrived at the hotel d'Angleterre, so many carriages stood round the door, that he despaired of getting accommodation. Monsieur La Buissiere approached the window, and was very sorry Milor could have no bed.

" So am I too, Mons. for I am much fatigued ; and the evening is dark," replied Mr. Mandville.

" Have you any English in the house ?" ma foi oui ils sont tous Engeline, Milor ! replied mine host.

A voice that proceeded from some one coming round the back of the chaise, called out,

" I'll kick that French fellow of a landlord, I know he is talking of us, for I heard him malicer

"Sure I know your voice, friend," cried Theodore, putting his head out of the window.

"Master dear Squire Theodore, do I live to see the day? we are all come! the tote, Miss Julia, and all.

Theodore waited not for etiquette, but jumped from his chaise without the step; and Stephen, determined to announce him, run under his feet all the way; he opened the door, but had not time to speak, for Mr. Mandville jostled the words into his stomach.

Here, reader, let us breathe? for after such a bustle, how can I be supposed fit for a description of love, duty and friendship? like poor Stephen, jostling the whole party.

Some cried, some laughed, some blushed, some fainted: no, nobody fainted; some kissed: in short, I know not what was done, or left undone, I was so delighted. I believe I must beg the favour of your fancy to form what I cannot describe, and return to the proceedings of the next morning, when it was agreed to halt for three or four days in that delightful spot.

The weather was fine, the buds shot forth, almost into leaves; the woods were romantic, even in that state; the birds chanted their hymeneal carol; the deer bounded through the forest—it swam the Etang; the merry horn wound through the avenues.

Theodore held his charmer by the arm; he breathed his vows; the plaintive turtle cooed above his head. Julia was not more than woman; she must not have been made of mortal mould, that could resist him.

"Take all that virtuous love can give?" she said. Theodore pressed her to his bosom.

It must appear a little extraordinary to my readers, after the account Mr. Butler had given of the retreat

retreat of Mrs. B——, that she should have emerged from the gloom of a cloister in Portugal, to the delights of bridal pomp in Paris; the contrast is too striking, to be ascribed to any power but magic.

To wind into the intricacies of this female machiavel, it will be necessary to advert to the moments of her first arrival at St. Helena.

Mr. Mandville had no sooner accommodated her on shore at that place, in a situation befitting her mode of living, than every body of condition complimented her with a visit, and she mixed in every amusement that offered itself. She certainly was not very happy, for in spite of the ardent endeavours of Theodore to hide the discontent of his heart, affection had too keen an eye, to let it pass unobserved; and love was not so predominant, as to hinder vanity from taking pique at his involuntary offence.

Amongst some other wind or weather bound ships, lay a French man of war, who was commanded by the Count J——, a young nobleman of most engaging manners, and handsome person; he was endowed with more than his national vivacity, (which too often exists in noise, and self applause) he said a thousand animated things for others, and the busines of amusing himself was happily blended with the entertainment of the company. He danced as well as Count M—d, and he sung quite as well as any gentleman ought to do.

Mrs. B—— was struck with his first appearance, but a second interview made her sensible she should get a vast deal better, by remaining a short time in her present abode.

The ship the Count commanded, had suffered so by a hurricane, that she had put in quite a wreck, and it would probably be two or three months, before she would be refitted, if the com-

mander found it suit him not to hurry the affair. It is not to be supposed any gentleman could, at a second interview, give a hint of that tendency; but Mrs. B——, who had great penetration, may be, divined it: or whether it was at all suggested, I won't say, but that her plan for partaking this salutary air, was fixed at that period, is beyond all doubt.

Mr. Mandville, perhaps, was too easily persuaded to depart without her; howbeit she made a transfer of her love—her passion diminishing from Theodore, as it augmented for the Count. She saw the former depart with a deceitful tear, which was soon wiped away by the hastily preferred lover.

Count J—— had been a very expensive young man, had long since expended the patrimony, bequeathed him by his dead father; indeed the life of a sailor was become perfectly convenient to him; as he could no longer live on shore, and he, clear sighted youth, beheld a hundred thousand charms in the widow, that *the indifferent Mr. Mandville was blind to.*

Scarce was that gentleman departed, when the Count ventured a formal declaration of his passion, and most honourable intentions.

The lady, who had passed Mr. Mandville as her relation, affected to be so far under his influence, as to render it necessary to hear from him, before she consented to the Count's proposals; nay, she even prohibited his frequent visits to her; yet he so far gained upon her tenderness, as to obtain a promise, should this cruel relative forbid the union, that she would go with him to France, if a safe and secret expedient could be contrived.

A short time after, the lady became a mother: she had taken the precaution to send home all her Indian domestics, but one faithful girl, tried in her service,

service, before this event took place. During her illness she told this girl, as soon as she recovered she meant to retire to a nunnery: that she had fixed upon one at Lisbon, from having an acquaintance some years back, with the superior; and that a life of penitence was now the first wish of her heart, could she be certain her child would not be forsaken.

Prepared by this tale, the black girl wept over the baby, while she received her lady's instructions, of how it was to be supplied—where the money was to be lodged, with other documents, necessary for so momentous an affair. Mrs. B—— told her she was to remain in the house, 'till she saw or heard from Mr. Mandville.

The Count heard she was ill—he was distracted; he wrote to her—begged to be admitted to her presence, but she refused him: at length she answered his letter, and failed not to attribute her illness to the accounts she had received of Mr. Mandville, with his entire disapprobation of her union with the Count.

This billet produced the most pressing solicitude from the Count; his letter breathed all that ardency so admired by Mrs. B——; he reminded her of her promise to elope with him—his ship was ready for sea—a priest was ready to unite them—every circumstance combined, he added, to bless the moment that should bring her to his arms.

A few days after, at sun rise, Mrs. B—— clothed herself in a long dishabille, with a veil thrown over her head; placed a paper on her dressing table, and dropping some tears at the thought of her child, walked slowly to the garden gate, and proceeded to the terrace, which bounded the river's side, at the end of which, by some stone steps, lay a barge, with a silken awning over it; the Count flew to support her trembling frame, and bear her to the boat, where I shall leave her,

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THE unconscious baby stretched its little limbs, and awoke its nurse ; she arose, and dressed it ; carried it to its mother's chamber, as was her custom.

The door was open, the bed forsaken, the written paper lay unfolded on the table ; she read as follows :

“ I have not fortitude enough to bid my child farewell ! be thou a mother to her, and thy reward shall equal thy care.”

Tears filled the eyes of the Asiatic—they fell on the infant, as she clasped it to her breast ; she sat down on the bedside. There was a silence all around her ; she felt as if the world was empty, and she and the poor babe its sole inhabitants. It laid its snowy hand on her black bosom—quit-ted the breast, and smiled in her face. Re-animated by this casual circumstance, she arose, went to the garden, where the morning breeze, and the smiles of her little charge, soon banished the first impressions of her sorrow, and her mind was turn-ed to fulfil her duty towards it.

Thus did Mrs. B—— concert and execute a scheme, that few heads could have conceived, and few hearts have been willing to put in practice.

She is now Madame La Comptesse, and *he* the enamoured, grateful husband, void of mistrust ; put into possession of immense riches. He would not thank the man who might inform him he ought to hate his wife.

But to return to our friends.

One might have supposed, from the little desire expressed by any of them to depart, that they had visited France with no other view than to see Chantilly. But Theodore recollecting, that an Ambassadore's chapel is as holy as any parish church in Christendom, proposed their moving forward to

Paris

Paris, and Robert was sent on to prepare his former hotel, to receive so large a family.

Mr. Mandville, on their arrival, took the earliest opportunity of informing Lord John Raymond, of the fortunate interruption he had met in his journey, and solicited him and the charming Marquise to meet him at Paris, as after a certain ceremony was performed, he should return to England, and be in no haste to quit it again. Mr. Mandville had a double motive in giving this information to his friend; the first was, the bringing such delightful people acquainted with each other; the last was, a hint to a certain Countess, to keep out of sight for a few weeks, that she might afterwards reign in unrivalled splendor without interruption.

Theodore felt none of the sentiments of our modern fine gentlemen; he boasted not the frailties of the fair; indeed he rather pitied, than condemned Mrs. B——, allowing her inconstancy to originate in his coldness and as the honour of her husband's family must be tarnished, should a discovery take place, Theodore carefully avoided every means that might tend to an eclaircissement.

Lord John received the accounts of Mr. Mandville's happiness, with sincere joy, but excused himself from a meeting, that must recall to his memory those sensations, that had well nigh cost him his life. He contented himself with giving every good wish to the lovely Julia, and promised, in a year or two, to visit them in England.

The ladies and gentlemen of our party had become so dissipated, since their arrival, at Paris, that Theodore could scarce ever procure a private interview with his beloved. Mr. and Mrs. Gordon, and Mr. and Mrs. St. Clair, had no compassion for our lover, but hurried Julia into all their various parties of pleasure, whether she would

would or not, by which means she became so environed by admirers, that at home or abroad she was ever in a crowd.

Sir Theodore had extensive connexions in Paris; he had visited the continent several times, and there was no capital town that did not afford him a numerous set of people of fashion, called old acquaintance.

Mr. Mandville had also a younger set of his own, and every one took occasion to redouble their assiduities towards an intimacy, since the divine Julia had made her appearance.

She felt herself extremely incommoded by this train of admirers. In the first place, the officious zeal of a French man of quality, puts a delicate English woman into a continual alarm. If she drops her fan, he starts from the other end of the room, with a velocity that oversets every thing in the way, and if there are many gentlemen, they risk knocking all their heads together, by the fervency of their pursuit. The poor lap dog is maimed, and the whole room shook, as with an earthquake. Then to put on her cloak, or pull it off, she is assailed by as many more; they watch the moment to seize her hand, instead of offering their own. When she is going to her carriage, and she can attend to neither, the music of the Opera, or the sentiment of the Comedie, for their efforts to divert her with their own vivacity.

Poor Julia was oppressed, and actually complained to Sir Theodore, of her sufferings; to Mr. Mandville she dared not, as his temper would have broke with every connexion that might seem troublesome to her.

Sir Theodore saw but one alternative to avoid this gathering crowd, that augmented every day.

"What is that, my dear sir?" said Julia, "I am sure I will adopt it." "Set

"Set aside the form of a long courtship, my angel daughter," continued he, "and give yourself at once to him who adores you."

Julia was not prepared for such an answer, as she had not represented her persecution, as arising from lovers, but from the impertinence of unmeaning gallantry.

Her blushing cheek, and downcast eye, spoke her answer; when, to add to her embarrassment, Theodore and her mother joined them.

The Baronet facetiously accused them of intrusion, at so critical a moment.

"I was putting the question, as it is termed," added he, "and my silent blushing maid left me a favourable inference, when your interruption has set us all wrong, and I shall lose her yet, amongst the train of Counts, Marquises and Chevaliers, that beset her; I had just informed her," continued he, "there was but one way to escape them, and that was, by a speedy marriage."

Theodore needed no further hint; he put himself on one knee before her; took her folded hands in his, nor left the posture, until in the face of Mrs. Byron, and Sir Theodore, she allowed him to name the following Thursday for their wedding day.

She now had an excuse for staying at home, but the young married people did not break in upon their plans, which had occupation for every day, if they had stayed three months in Paris.

They were at Versailles, Marli, St. Germain, and every place worth seeing, within forty miles; and not only their days, but part of the nights, were encroached on, until Sir Theodore, by one grave look at Alicia, forbade raking.

Gertrude did not delight in this rapid succession of amusement, but she fell in with the humour of her husband, who himself was much biased by George Gordon.

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On Thursday, however, they were disengaged from every thought, or wish, but that of conducting to the happiness of the day, and Julia gave her hand (at the Ambassador's chapel) that morning, to the exulting Theodore. He looked a perfect Apollo; the animation of his mind threw a divinity into his countenance; she looked La vierge placidly benign, while the surrounding groupe of happy faces, called for the pencil of a Raphael or a West.

They all set off on an excursion of some days, and then returned to Paris, where they pass'd one fortnight, as other English people do. They then returned to London, and occupied the house in Albemarle-Street.

Theodore received a letter from Mr. Butler, who had carried his little charge, and her nurse, to his own house. He shewed it to Julia, who throwing her arms round his neck, press'd him to take her down with him, to bring it home.

He was oppressed by her goodness, so as scarcely to articulate an answer, but after some reflection, he thought it would be better to call in their return to BellePont, and carry it, and the Doctor's whose family, down with them.

Lord Orwell was one of the first visitors that paid their compliments in Albemarle-Street. His acknowledgments to Mr. and Mrs. Mandville, were such as proceed from a heart well acquainted with the sentiments of gratitude and generosity; and as a tribute acceptable to Julia, he settled Orwell Manor, and its environs, worth four hundred per annum, on the youngest daughter of Mrs. Byron.

Lord Bellarmine, Lord and Lady Duncairn, and Lady Middleton, came to them directly, on their arrival in London; and the two Lady Maldowns

downs and my Lord; Lady Sophia, and Mr. Beauchamp, arrived next morning, compleatly happy.

Captain Bowman came up from Portsmouth, for a few days, and proved to be the identical sea officer who had deposited his body in the pure sheets of Miss Mortimer, at —, but as she was in Scotland at present, no injury was done to her delicacy, by his being a guest at Sir Theodore's.

Mr. Charles Wentworth was actually gone to begin his studies at Oxford, with an intention to undertake the *cure of souls*, at a more advanced period.

The season now advanced to a degree of heat, that drive people out of London.

Mrs. Byron had been gone into the country about a fortnight, to prepare for the reception of her friends. The Captain had made a slip up to town for one week, in order to conduct her down, and also see his little woman, and the rest of the party were ready, to set off, joined by Lady Maldown, Dowager, her two sons and two daughters, who were going to make a visit to Mrs. Barbara Warton, and Mrs. Byron.

Mr. and Mrs. Mandville quitted them, after they had proceeded as far as N——h, and soon arrived at Doctor Butler's; but before they got to the door of his house, the bustle in the village brought the black girl, with the babe in her arms, to join the gaping crowd, at the sight of the fine chariot. Theodore jumped out, and taking it eagerly from the nurse, gave it to his wife, who in her turn, held it up to his face, that he might kiss it: then still retaining it, she went into the house, and they were soon joined by Mr. Butler, who had been visiting a patient, and his wife, who had been altering her dress: a very good woman, though not very handsome.

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The Doctor had much to say, too much for the time his friends could spare; he could not immediately consent to accompany them, but gave his promise, in a week or fortnight, to follow them to Wales. Julia proposed taking the infant with herself, but Mr. Butler persuaded them to suffer him to bring them altogether, bag and baggage, as he called it, wife, nurse and child, and Theodore prevailed on Julia, that it might be so, concluding afterwards in his own mind, when Mr. Butler should settle near them, the infant should be brought up for some years with Mrs. Butler, unless he should have no other children.

While Lord Maldown's party proceeded to Mrs. Barbara's, the Mandville's rested at the Manor, to enjoy a week of peace, after all the tumults of the last two months; but they were never to be at rest, for Stephen now solicited the reward of all his toils, from the hand of Dorcas, so they were married, and she was preferred to be housekeeper to Mrs. Theodore Mandville, when they should be settled in a house of their own, a plan of which had been drawn, to be built about half a mile from the Baronet's.

Mrs. Gordon lay in of a boy some time after, and not being able to nurse it herself, it was placed under the care of Mrs. Butler, with the little Theodora.

I was obliged to be absent for near three years, but on my return, I found Mrs. St. Clair with two boys, Mrs. Mandville with one girl, and Annette shot up to a fine young woman, very much admired by Lord Bellarmine. Captain Bowman had become a landsman during the peace, and was teaching his little son to dance a hornpipe, and Mrs. Byron the happiest of grandmothers.